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SAINT VIṢṆU PURĪ AND HIS BHAKTI-RATNĀVALĪ

[*Based on an illustrated Ms. from Gujarat, dated 1750 A.D.*]

Viṣṇu Purī of Tirhut.

All that Viṣṇu Purī says of himself in his work *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* is that he was a *Paramahaṁsa Sannyāsī*, and that he was a native of Tirhut.

Nābhāji.

We find mention of him in the *Bhakta-Mālā* of Nābhājī (17th century). Nābhājī or Nābhādāsa was an itinerant Vaiṣṇava Sādhu, who compiled in Saṃvat 1689 (1633 A. D.) his notices of Vaiṣṇava saints from information he gathered in his pilgrimages to the various shrines that he visited. This Nābhādāsa or Nārāyaṇadāsa, a follower of Rāmānanda, and a contemporary of Tulasīdāsa is the author of the *Bhaktamālā*. This, with the commentary of Priyādāsa, may be called the *Acta Sanctoram* of the four churches of Vaiṣṇavism (Rāmānuja, Madhva, Niṃbārka and Vallabha). It is a store-house of legends regarding the saints ancient and mediæval of the Bhāgavata Religion. The importance of this book for a just comprehension of religious attitude of modern Hinduism cannot be overrated. For Northern India, it and Tulasīdāsa's Rāmāyaṇa are the two text-books of the modern Bhāgavatism.

Nābhājī and his *Bhakta Mālā*.

Nābhājī wrote in the Hindī of Rajputana—the Western Hindi as it is called—from which part of the country he flourished. Hence it is that Viṣṇu Purī figures in his *Bhakta-Mālā*—the "Garland of Saints". In the *Bhakta-Mālā* there are accounts of 160 Bhaktas. Except some twenty names which are legendary, we find that all other saints are historical. It appears as if Nābhājī recounts the Bhaktas down from Pauranik legend in rather a chronological order; and it is not until Jayadeva's mention that we come to solid ground of historical account. After Jayadeva comes Śrīdhara, followed by Bilvamaṅgala and Vallabhācārya after whom Viṣṇu Purī is mentioned. Viṣṇu Purī's mention precedes that of Jñānadeva, the Marathā saint of the 15th century.

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The *chhappaya* for Viṣṇu Purī which is very clear is as following:—

Chhappaya for Viṣṇu Purī.

(छप्पय)

भागवत धर्म उत्तंग, आन धर्म आनन देखा ।
पीतलपट पर विगत, निकष ज्यौं कुन्दन रेखा ॥
कृष्णकृपा कही वेल, फलित सत्संग दिखायो ।
कोटि ग्रन्थको अर्थ, तेरह विरचनमें गायो ॥
महासमुद्र भागवत–तें, भक्ति–रतन–राजि रची ।
कलिजीव जंजाली कारणे, विष्णुपुरी वडी निधि संची ॥

Viṣṇu Purī must have lived long before Nābhājī who flourished in the 17th century so as to have established his fame as an author and saint, sufficiently eminent to have secured a place in *Bhakta-Mālā*.†

The date of Viṣṇu Purī.

Viṣṇu Purī's '*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' or shortly called '*Ratnāvalī*' has been translated into Bengali by Kṛiṣṇa Dāsa Lauṛiyā early in the 15th century which clearly points out that the original Sanskrit must have been composed some time before this date. Hence the date of Viṣṇu Purī has been placed circa 1400 A.D. *

Bengali translation of Visnu Purī's work in 15th century.

This clearly establishes that the later date suggested for the composition of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* from the following two verses found at the end of the text in some manuscripts accompanied by the commentary *Kānti-Mālā* written by one Śrīdhara, is not tenable :

Śaka 1555 for Visnu Purī's work untenable.

वाराणस्यां महेशस्य सान्निध्ये हरिमन्दिरे ।
भक्तिरत्नावली सिद्धा सहिता कान्तिमालया ॥
महायज्ञै–शरै–प्राणै–शशाङ्क–गुणिते शके ।
फाल्गुने शुक्लपक्षस्य द्वितीयायां सुमंगले ॥

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† The date of Viṣṇu Purī has been discussed on different grounds by Rāi Bahādur Amar Nāth Rāy in *Indian Culture* Vol. V, No. 1, for July 1938, and on a study of mss. in the Dacca University collection by Dr. S. K. Dé in "*Indian Culture*" Vol. V, No. 2, for October 1938.

* Dr. J. N. Farquhar : 'Outline of the Religious Literature of India,' p. 302 (1920).

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Śaka 1555 by adding 135 years gives Saṁvat 1690. If this be the date of composition of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, with *Kānti-Mālā Ṭikā*,—conceding for the while that both are by the same author—the inclusion of Viṣṇu Purī's name in the *Bhakta-Mālā* composed in Saṁvat 1689 would be unthinkable. It will be pointed out later on that Śaka 1555 is the date of the commentary of Śrīdhara.

Viṣṇu Purī's identity.

It is noted[1] that Viṣṇu Purī was also known by the name of Vaikuṇṭha Purī, who hailed from Tirhut (Tirbhukta) and was a disciple of Madanagopāla. He is said to be the author of the following four works: (1) *Bhagvad-bhakti-Ratnāvalī*; (2) *Bhāgavatāmṛta*; (3) *Haribhakti-Kalpa-latā* and (4) '*Vākya-Vivaraṇa*.[2] The compiler of the *Hindi Viśvakośa*, notices another Viṣṇu Purī Goswāmi, the author of a Vaiṣṇava work called '*Viṣṇu-Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' as being different from the one mentioned above. But it appears that both namesakes were identical persons.

Three versions of the anecdote re: composition of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*.

As many as three different versions regarding the circumstances under which the work *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* was composed are met with, all of them associating the name of Jagannāthadeva, of the Puruṣottama Kṣetra of Purī, as being the lord at whose feet the work was most respectfully dedicated by the Vaiṣṇava Saint Viṣṇu Purī, who was residing at Kāśī.

First version.

The incident noted in the Viśvakośa quoted above, as being from the *Bhakta-Mālā*[3] is as follows: Viṣṇu Purī, it is said, was for the greater part, residing in Benares. Based on this fact an anecdote has been made current, with a pun on the word 'Purī' which means both the author—Saint Viṣṇu Purī, as well as the holy Tīrtha Jagannātha Purī.

Kāśī being also one of the *Mukti-Purīs*, it is said that from Puruṣottama Kṣetra (Purī) Lord Jagannāthadeva sent the follow-

1. The *Viśvakośa* (Hindi), Vol. XXI, p. 704.
2. The *Padyāvalī* of Rūpagosvāmin records some verses in the name of Viṣṇupuri, Viṣṇupuripāda, Tairbhukta Kavi, and simply Tairbhukta. It is difficult to identify which Viṣṇu Purī is meant. *Vide* 'Index to Rūpagosvāmin's Padyāvalī'—*Calcutta, Oriental Journal*, April, 1935.
3. Can this be the Bengāli recension of Nābhājī's *Bhakta-Mālā* by Kriśṇa Dāsa Bābāji, who, it is said, had revised and enlarged the original to a great extent?

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ing message to Viṣṇu Purī: "Puri, I have fully understood you; it is with a view to attain *Bhukti* and *Mukti* that you have settled in Kāśī; whereas I am a dweller in forests and cannot give you either *Bhukti* or *Mukti*; hence it is that you do not like to pay a visit to me; however I cherish a hope to have your sight."

Hearing this message of the Lord Jagannāthadeva, full of irony as well as love and tenderness, Viṣṇu Purī sent the following reply: "My Lord, I do not understand either what is Bhukti, Mukti, Gayā, Kāśī, Mathurā, Vṛndāvana or any thing else. I neither know you, my Lord, nor your greatness. I know only this much: that since the name of Jagannātha-Kṛṣṇa has entered my ears, I have been constantly wearing the garland of that name in my heart. Now that my Lord has been pleased to call me to be in His presence, I shall certainly be once at His feet."

After a lapse of some time, Viṣṇu Purī, taking with him his work "*Viṣṇu-bhakti-Ratnāvalī*" went to Puruṣottama Kṣetra (Purī) and having taken the *darśaṇa* of Jagannāthadeva, placed his work at the feet of the Lord.

This consecration of the 'Garland of the Gems of Devotion' at the hands of the Lord, went a great way towards enhancing the value of Viṣṇu Purī's work, in the eye of the Vaiṣṇava devotees.

Second version.

Another report is current among the Vaiṣṇavas that Caitanya-deva of Nadia and Viṣṇu Purī met at Kāśī, while the former was on his way back from his pilgrimage to Vṛndāvana. It was natural that they should have been charmed with each other—Caitanya by the Bhakti and learning of Viṣṇu Purī, and Viṣṇu Purī by the spiritual grandeur and the personal magnetism of the Prophet of Nadia. Caitanya left for Bengal and subsequently became a permanent resident of Purī.

The report that has been handed down[1] to the Vaiṣṇava world is that a pilgrim, a disciple of Viṣṇu Purī went from Kāśī to Purī, and met Caitanya to whom he communicated the greetings of Viṣṇu Purī. At the time of the visitor's departure from Purī to Kāśī, he inquired if he had any message to impart to, or any request to make of Viṣṇu Purī. In the presence of the assembled Vaiṣṇavas, Caitanya asked the departing pilgrim to tell Viṣṇu Purī to send him a '*Ratnāvalī*' (Necklace of Gems).

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1. Introduction, iii. "The Sacred Books of the Hindus", Vol. VII. *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, with *Kānti-Mālā* (1912).

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The Sādhus present there were astonished to hear this request, proceeding from a man who had renounced the luxuries of the world. But they had not the boldness to question him for what he had done.

Time elapsed and then all of a sudden, once again turned up the pilgrim from Kāśī and presented a manuscript to Caitanya, saying that Viṣṇu Purī had made to him this present of a 'Necklace of Gems' that he had wanted. The manuscript turned out to be "*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*."

The Vaiṣṇava assembly which had been annoyed with Caitanya for making a request which was unworthy of a Vaiṣṇava leader, now found out their mistake. They were overjoyed to find that their Prophet had simply sent a message of inspiration which Viṣṇu Purī properly understood, and carried out the behest of his honoured friend. This manuscript Caitanya placed at the feet of Jagannāthajī.

Viṣṇu Purī a contemporary of Caitanya ?

The above version of the anecdote places Viṣṇu Purī (circa 1400) as a contemporary of Lord Caitanya (b.1485–d.1533), which appears to be far from the truth, as already pointed out in the foregone paragraphs.

Third version.

The traditional story, as given in the above versions, as to the circumstances which led to the composition of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, is, however, contradicted by the unknown author of the Hindi verse—version of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, styled "*Bhāṣā-nibaddha Bhakti-prakāśikā-ṭīkā*" in Hindi verse—*dôhā*, *chaupāi*, *soraṭhā*, etc.[1]

This version suggests an altogether different story; although, the two places Kāśī and Purī figure commonly as scenes for the incident. A devoted friend of Saint Viṣṇu Purī named Mādhava Dāsa, had once asked of Viṣṇu Purī to give him a novel kind of necklace of gems and pearls, which would give him (real) happiness. Hence at his request, Viṣṇu Purī strung together the Gems of Bhakti-Sayings (from the Bhāgavata), and sent it on to the Puruṣottama Kṣetra (Purī) (where it is believed his friend Mādhava Dāsa was staying).

1. Ms. No. 1548 at the Oriental Institute, Baroda has folios 2 to 102; the first folio and those subsequent to 102 are missing, bringing down the book to the 13th *Viracana*, verse 12 only. Facsimile of the introductory portion of the Ms. is given on the next page. The original size of the Ms. is 9″×5″.

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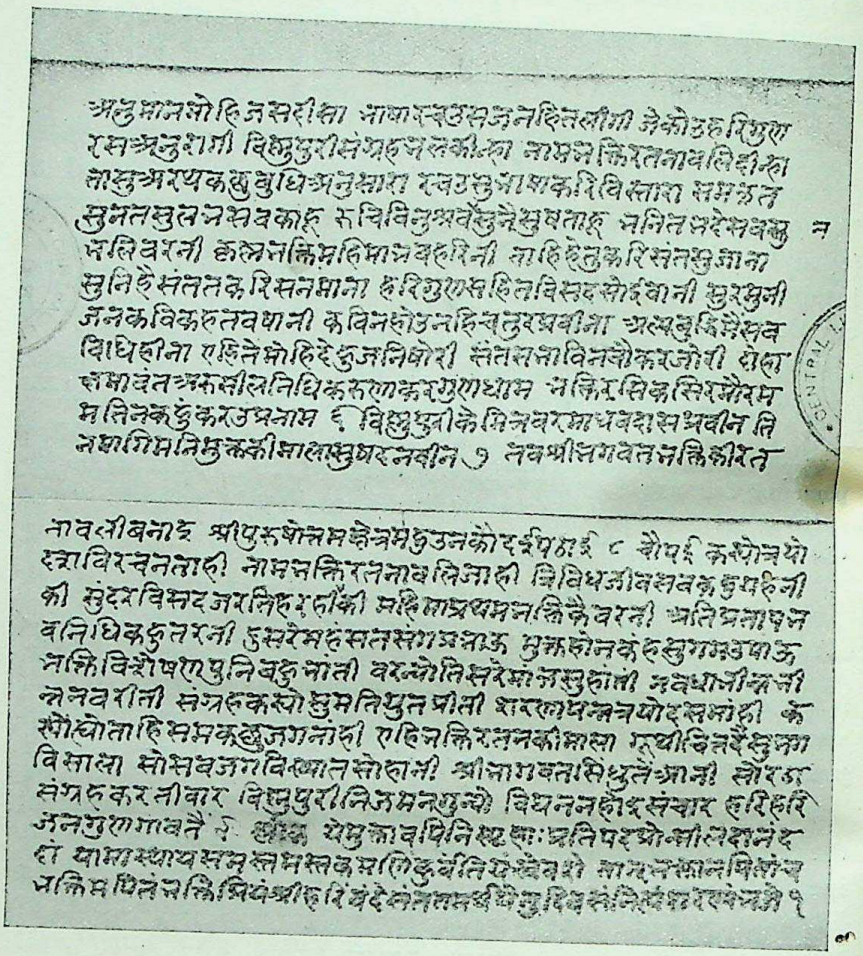
The text supporting this version is as under :—

" विष्णुपुरीके मित्रवर, माधवदास प्रवीन ।
तिन मागि मनि-मुक्तकी, माला सुखद नवीन ॥ ७ ॥
तब श्रीभगवद्–भक्तिकी, रतनावली बनाइ ।
श्रीपुरुषोत्तमक्षेत्रमहु, उनकौ दई पठाई ॥ ८ ॥ "



Extant Introductory portion of Bhāsānibaddha Bhaktiprakāsikā Ṭikā
(Baroda Oriental Institute Collection)

Some describe Viṣṇu Purī as a Madhva ascetic, who probably lived in the second half of the 14th century.[1] But this statement requires to be reconsidered. The text printed in the 'Sacred

Vaiṣṇava Sect of Viṣṇu Purī.

1. Dr. J. N. Farquhar : 'Outline of the Religious Literature of India,' p. 302.

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Books of the Hindus Series' has an invocation to Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Gopīs (श्री गोपानाथाय नमः।).

In as many as 15 MSS. of the work that I have examined, the text starts with salutations like :—

श्री राधावल्लभाय नमः। and
निम्वादित्याय नमः। or
श्रीमते नीमादित्याथ नमः। श्री राधाकृष्णाय नमः। or
श्री राधावल्लभो जयति।[1]

This at least clearly points out that the work was very popular among the followers of Nimbārka, who preached the Bhakti of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his consort Rādhā.

Subject-matter of the Bhakti-Ratnāvalī.

The Magnum Opus of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti-Śāstra is the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. Here is shown the application of the principles of Bhakti to the devotion of Viṣṇu, and to His great manifestations—Avatāras, and to the Vaiṣṇava saints, who have become one with him. The *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* is a selection of the finest utterances on nine-fold forms of Bhakti from the Bhāgavata, arranged according to subject in 13 groups. The author has called each of these collections a string of gems (*Viracana*), and named the whole as 'the Necklace of Bhakti gems'—the best introduction to Bhāgavata-Bhakti. The presentation of the subject is in a popular form.

Nine-fold devotion to boyhood of Kṛṣṇa in the Bhāgavata.

The *raison d'etre* of the Bhāgavata was that in the *Mahābhārata*, Vyāsa its author had omitted the treatment of Bhakti and it was to make up that want that he brought out this work.

While the *Hari-Vaṃśa* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, each gives some account of Kṛṣṇa's youth spent among the gopas and gopis of Vṛndābana and its neighbourhood, they deal with the whole life of Kṛṣṇa. But the *Bhāgavata* scarcely refers to his later life, but spends all its strength over his boyhood and youth. Hence the hold it has had on some of the best Vaiṣṇava communities, and on many of the noble minds of India.

What distinguishes the *Bhāgavata* from all earlier literature is its new theory of Bhakti ; and therein lies its greatness. Some

1. Bom. Univ. Library, Bhadkamkar Memorial Collection has 3 Mss. of this work. Bundle No. 33/70 begins with श्रीगणेशाय नमः। श्रीगोपालो जयति and ends with श्रीगोपालकृष्णाय नमः। श्रीसाम्बाय। Nos. 20/38 and 25/25 contain bare text. They have been, through oversight, credited to the name of वोपदेव in the list.

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of its utterances on this subject are worthy of a place in the best literature of mysticism and devotion. This element may be most conveniently studied in the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*.

Viṣṇu Purī's Justification of the Bhakti-Ratnāvalī.

The purpose, inspiration and the worth of the '*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' are mentioned by Viṣṇu Purī in the four introductory verses (verses 7, 8, 9, 10) wherein he justifies the utility of the present compilation. These verses are important as being the personal statement of the author regarding his composition :—

" दूरान्निशम्य महिमानमुपेत्य पार्श्व-
मन्तः प्रविश्य शुभभागवतामृताब्धेः ॥
पश्यामि कृष्णकरुणाञ्जननिर्मलेन
हृल्लोचनेन भगवद्भजनं हि रत्नम् ॥ ७ ॥

(Having heard the greatness of Bhāgavata from afar, I approached it, and entered in its ocean of nectar. Therein I see with my mind's eye, made clear-visioned by the application of the collyrium (in the form) of Kṛṣṇa's grace, the jewel deposited in it, *viz.*, the devotion of the blessed Lord (भगवद्भजनम्).

Inspiration for the work.

तदिदमतिमहार्घं भक्तिरत्नं मुरारे—
रहमधिकसयत्नः प्रीतये वैष्णवानाम् ॥
हृदिगतजगदीशादेशमासाद्य माद्यन्
निधिवरमिव तस्माद् वारिधेरुद्धरामि ॥ ८ ॥

(Out from that ocean of Bhāgavata, I bring forth this invaluable treasure, the precious gem of Bhakti for the gratification of Viṣṇu-devotion, having been prompted (inspired) by command of the Ruler of the Universe, He who dwells in my heart.)

Value of the compilation.

Somebody may ask : when there is already the valuable *Bhāgavata*, what is the utility of this effort ? The reply is that the original work is not handy, and hence this collection, which can even be committed to memory,[1] is justified.

कण्ठे कृता कुलमशेषमलंकरोति
वेश्मस्थिता निखिलमेव तमोपहन्ति ॥
तामुज्ज्वलां गुणवतीं जगदीशभक्ति-
रत्नावलीं सुकृतिनः परिशीलयन्तु ॥ ९ ॥

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1. Cf. the Gujarati commentary (Saṁvat 1806) after verse 8:
ए ग्रंथनुं प्रयोजन । श्री भागवत छते ए नवो ग्रंथ करवो पड्यो ते शुं ? ते एटला माटि । भक्तरत्नावली किहितां माला कंठनि विषि धरी होए तो घणूं शोभे ते माटे ए ग्रंथ कर्यो छि ।

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(This necklace, if placed round the neck (or if committed to memory) adorns the person of the wearer ; if kept in the house dispels its evils of darkness (ignorance). May the blessed (those of good actions) fondly hold fast this necklace of gems of devotion, which is (strung by a thread) full of the brilliant glory of the Lord of the world.)

Utility of the effort.

निखिलभागवतश्रवणालसा
वहु कथाभिरथानवकाशिनः ।
अयमयं ननु तानतु सार्थको
भवतु विष्णुपुरीग्रथनग्रहः ॥

—त्रयोदशविरचनम्, श्लो. १०

(Let this attempt of stringing the jewels into a necklace by Viṣṇu Purī be of use to those who cannot apply themselves to hear the whole of the *Bhāgavata*, either owing to their want of desire or want of time, due to their engagements in the various affairs of life.)

Viṣṇu Purī's apology for the work.

Having dedicated the fruit arising from the effort to compile the work, to the Lord of Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu Purī concludes with the following three verses :—

एवं श्रीश्रीरमण भवता यत्समुत्तेजितोऽहं
चाञ्चल्ये वा सकलविषये सारनिर्धारणे वा ॥
आत्मप्रज्ञाविभवसदृशैस्तत्र यत्नैर्ममैतैः
साकं भक्तैरगतिसुगते तुष्टिमेहि त्वमेव ॥

—त्रयोदशविरचनम्, श्लो. ११

(Having been encouraged by thee, O Lord of Lakṣmi, thus have I performed the work of stringing the necklace, with such intellectual ability as I possessed, and with the co-operation of my fellow devotees. It may be put down to a wanton intellectual activity or to my endeavour to determine the truth. Accept it graciously, O Lord.)

Fitness for general approval.

Viṣṇu Purī, then states that his effort is worthy of approval from men of various temperaments :—

साधूनां स्वतएव संमतिरिह स्यादेव भक्त्यर्थिना-
मालोक्य ग्रथनश्रमं च विदुषामस्मिन् भवेदादरः ।
ये केचित्परकृत्युपश्रुतिपरास्तानर्थये मत्कृतिं
भूयो वीक्ष्य वदन्त्ववद्यमिह चेत्सा वासना स्थास्यति ॥

—त्रयोदशविरचनम्, श्लो. १२.

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(I have every hope that good people whose aim of life is to get at Bhakti will accord welcome to the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*. And the learned, having regard to my labour of stringing the gems, will receive the necklace with their approbation. As regards these persons who are given to captiousness, I entreat them to look into my work thoroughly, and speak out its faults, which they discern in it, if after their study of it there remain any desire for fault-finding.)

Author's modesty.

The author, out of modesty, taking upon himself the odium for undertaking the work, rests satisfied if his effort turns out to be of some service to those for whom it is meant.

एष स्यामहमल्पबुद्धिविभवोप्येकोऽपि कोऽपि ध्रुवम्
मध्ये भक्तजनस्य मत्कृतिरियं न स्यादवज्ञास्पदम् ।
किं विद्याः शरघाः किमुज्ज्वलकुलाः किं पौरुषं किं गुणा-
स्तत्किं सुन्दरमादरेण रसिकैर्नापीयते तन्मधु ? ॥

—त्रयोदशविरचनम्, श्लो० १३.

(Whatever I am, of small intellectual powers, friendless and unknown, let not my work be an object of ridicule among the devotees of the Lord. What intellect, distinguished parentage, prowess or qualities can the bees boast of ? Yet do not men drink with zest the sweet honey they supply ?)

Text of the Bhakti-Ratnāvalī.

The text of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, as printed by the Pāṇini office, Allahabad, in the 'Sacred Books of the Hindus' Series in 1912, has given rise to some confusion: (i) first, by accepting without much hesitation the Sanskrit commentary as being by Viṣṇu Purī himself[1] and (ii) secondly, by printing the text, without proper collation with Mss., thereby allowing inaccuracy to creep in at some places.

Four Sets of Mss.

The first point about the authorship of the commentary is conclusively settled by an examination of several Mss. We have come across *four*

1. However a note on p. 153 of the S. B. H. edition based on the text in the Calcutta edition published before 1912, throws clear doubt about the authorship of the commentary :—

"The statement as to when and where the work was composed is not to be reckoned as conclusive evidence. The two couplets embodying this declaration are not found in all Mss. Perhaps they are statements of the copyist....."

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sets of the '*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' Mss :—

(i) firstly those which contain the bare text by Saint Viṣṇu Purī ;

(ii) secondly those which contain also the Sanskrit commentary '*Kānti-Mālā*' with a clear statement by Śrīdhara ;

(iii) thirdly, those which have a Hindi gloss ; and

(iv) fourthly, those which have a running commentary in Gujarati.

Kānti-Mālā of Śridhara.

Śrīdhara, the commentator in Sanskrit out of modesty begs to be excused for the fault of omission and commission while explaining the text of Viṣṇu Purī. Śrīdhara's further statement as to when and where the work was composed leaves absolutely very little doubt on the point.

The text of Śrīdhara's conclusion of his '*Kānti-Mālā*' is as follows :—

इत्येषा बहुयत्नतः खलु कृता श्रीभक्तिरत्नावली
तत्प्रीत्यै च तथैव सम्प्रकटिता तत् कान्तिमाला मया ॥
[1]अत्र श्रीधरसत्तमोक्तिलिखने न्यूनाधिकं यत्त्वभूत्
तत्क्षन्तुं सुधियोऽर्हत स्वरचनालुब्धस्य मे चापलम् ॥ १ ॥
महायज्ञै–शरै–प्राणै–शशाङ्क–गुणिते शके ।
फाल्गुने शुक्लपक्षस्य द्वितीयायां सुमंगले ॥ २ ॥
वाराणस्यां महेशस्य सान्निध्ये हरिमन्दिरे ।
भक्ति-रत्नावली सिद्धा सहिता कान्तिमालया ॥ ३ ॥

Hindi Gloss in Ṭīkā-Gadya.

The third set of Mss. contain the Sanskrit original, with gloss in Hindi prose, of the type usually found in such running commentaries ; the explanations might have been based upon Śrīdhara's '*Kānti-Mālā*'.

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1. A·Ms. (folio 1-160) of Sanskrit text with Hindi prose gloss explains the latter half of the verse thus :—

"अत्र कहत इहां श्रीधर स्वामीकी सत्तम कहते उत्तम जे उक्ति ताको जो लिखन ताके विषे जो न्यूनाधिक घटि बढि होय तत् तत्र रचना जे कर्तव्य ताके विषे लुब्ध ते चपलता ताको क्षंतुं कहत क्षमावान् अह कह योग्य है ।"

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As a specimen of the type, the beginning portion in one of the Mss. is quoted for comparison :—

श्रीमते नीमादित्याय नमः । श्री राधाकृष्णाय नमः ।
अथ भक्तिरत्नावली सटीक लिख्यते ।
श्रीकृष्णं परमानन्दं नत्वा कुर्वे यथामतिः ।
भक्तिरत्नावली–वार्तिकं वृत्या सज्जनसंमुखे ॥
[1]**ये मुक्तावपि** । टीका । विष्णुपुरी कहत हैं । तान भक्तानपि तिनं वैष्णवनिको संतत अहं वन्दे । च पुनः तां भक्तिमपि । ता भक्ति को अनुदिवसं अर्थये हूँ मागाँ । तं ताहि भक्तिप्रियं भक्ति है प्रिय जाको । शरण्यं शरण्ये योग्य ऐसो जो हरि ताहि नित्यं भजे । ते भक्त है कैसे । ये भक्ता मुक्तावपि निस्पृहाः मुक्ति–हूं विषे स्पृहा जे वांछा ताकरि रहित । जिनभक्तानि हरि भक्ति छांडि मुक्ति हूं कीं वांछा नाही । तिनहां सों भक्ति है । कैसी प्रतिपद प्रतिक्षिण प्रोन्मीलत प्रकट होत है आनंद ताकी दैनहारी जो भक्तिको अस्थाय (?) करि श्री हरि समस्त ते ब्रह्मादिक तिनको मस्तकमणि जाको स्वे वशे कुर्वन्ति ताहि अहं वंदे ।

The "Bhakti-Prakāśikā" in Hindi verse.

The newly discovered verse-commentary on '*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' is very important ; but the Ms. that has been traced from the Baroda Oriental Institute Collection is wanting in the first folio, as well as about two or three folios at the end. Hence it has not been possible to ascertain the author and date of the **भाषानिबद्ध भक्तिप्रकाशिका टीका ।**

Still, however, the introductory portion of the commentary that has survived is full of relevant information. The following long quotation may be tolerated by the readers ; and be read

1. This original verse which is the मंगल श्लोक of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* in all Mss. is evidently composed by Viṣṇu Purī :

ये मुक्तावपि निस्पृहाः प्रतिपदप्रोन्मीलदानन्ददां
यामास्थाय समस्तमस्तकमणिं कुर्वन्ति यं स्वे वशे ।
तान् भक्तानपि तां च भक्तिमपि तं भक्तिप्रियं श्रीहरिं
वन्दे संततमर्थयेऽनु दिवसं नित्यं शरण्यं भजे ॥ १ ॥

but this is through mistake given as forming the introductory verse of the commentary published in the Pāṇini Office Edition. See the extract from the Gujarati prose-gloss infra.

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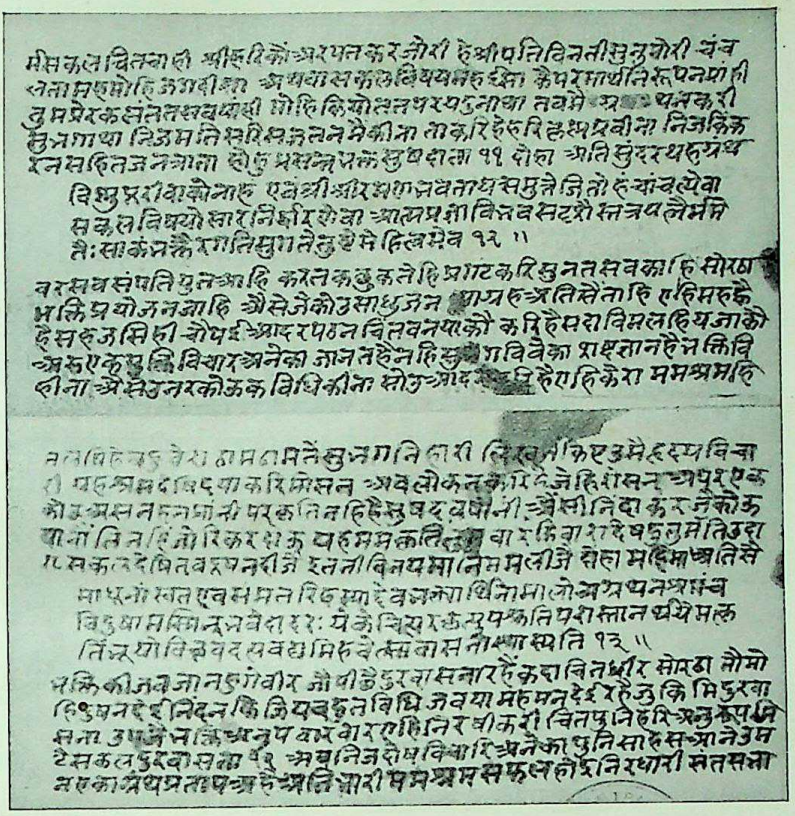

Extant last folio of the Bhāṣānibaddhe Bhaktiprakāṣikā Ṭikā
(Baroda Oriental Institute Collection)

with advantage :—

(चौपई)

। अनुमान मोहि जसदीसा ॥

भाषा रचउ सजन हित लागी । जे कोउ हरिगुण–रस अनुरागी ॥
विष्णुपुरी संग्रह भल कीन्हा । नाम 'भक्ति–रत्नावलि' दीन्हा ॥
तासु अरथ कछु बुधि–अनुसारा । रचउ सुभाषा करि विस्तारा ॥
समझत सुनत सुलभ सब काहू । रुचि विनु श्रवन सुने सुख ताहू ॥
भनित भदेस वस्तु भलि वरनी । कृष्णभक्ति–महिमा भव–हरिनी ॥
ताहि हेतु करि संत सुजाना । सुनिहै संतत करि सनमाना ॥
हरिगुण सहित विसद सोई बानी । सुरमुनिजन कवि कहत वखानी ॥
कवि न होउ नहि चतुर प्रवीना । अल्प बुद्धि मैं सब विधिहीना ॥
एहितें मोहि देहु जनि खोरी । संत–सभा विनवौं कर जोरी ॥

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(दोहा)

क्षमावंत अरु सीलनिधि, करुणाकर गुणधाम ।
भक्ति–रासिक–सिर–मौर मम, तिनकहुं करउ प्रनाम ॥ ६ ॥
विष्णुपुरीके मित्रवर, **मा**धवदास प्रवीन ।
तिन मागि मनि–मुक्तकी, माला सुखद नवीन ॥ ७ ॥
तब श्री**भ**गवद्–भक्तिकी, **र**तनावली बनाई ।
श्री पुरुषोत्तम–क्षेत्र–महु, उनकौ दई पठाई ॥ ८ ॥

(चौपई)

The contents of 13 Virachanas.

कर्यो **त्र**योदश **वि**रचन ताही । नाम "भक्तिरतनावलि" जाही ॥
त्रिविध जीव सब कहु यह नीकी । सुंदर विसद जरतिहर हीयकी ॥
महिमा **प्र**थम भक्तिकै वरनी । अति प्रताप भवनिधि कहु तरनी ॥
दुसरे महं सतसंग प्रभाऊ । मुक्तहोन कहं सुगम उपाऊ ॥
भक्ति विशेषण पुनि वहु भांती । वरन्यो **ती**सरे–मांझ सुहांतीं ॥
नवधा भिन्न भिन्न नव रीति । संग्रह कर्यो सुमतियुत प्रीति ॥
शरणापन्न **त्र**योदश मांही । कह्यो ताहि सम कछु जग नांही ॥
एहि **भ**क्तिरतनकी माला । गूंथी चित्त दै सुभग विसाला ॥
सो सब जग विख्यात सोहानी । श्री**भा**गवत–सिंधु–तें आनी ॥

(सोरठा)

संग्रह करती बार, **वि**ष्णुपुरी निज मन गुन्यो ।
विघन न होइ संचार, हरि हरिजन गुण गावतैं ॥ ९ ॥

Commentary in archaic Gujarati Prose.

The fourth set of Mss. contain Sanskrit text with commentary in archaic Gujarati prose. The following specimen may be read with interest, as also forming a parallel to the corresponding *Hindi ṭikā-gadya* quoted above :—

श्री राधावल्लभो जयति । श्रीकृष्णाय नमः । **ये मुक्तावपि** । टीका । **भ**क्तरत्नावली लिखिता । एहनो कर्ता **वि**ष्णुपुरी ग्रथिताय श्री भागवत–अमृत–समुद्र–मध्येथी उधर्ण कीधू छि तेहनो अर्थ प्राकृते लषीए छि । **विष्णुपुरी–वचनं** । श्री–हरिने नमू छू निति । ते हरि केहेवा छि । जेहने भक्त वल्लभ छि अथवा भक्तने जे वल्लभ छि । ते भक्त केहेवा छि जे मुक्तिनि विषि निस्पृह छि । ते भक्तने नमू छुं । वली हरि केहेवा छि । प्रतिपद किहितां क्षण क्षणनि विषि भक्तरूप विकास पामतो ये आनंद तेहनो आपनार छि । वली ये पोतानांने समस्तना मुकुटमणि करि छि ।

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वली ते भक्त केहेवा छि जे सदा हरिना गमताना चालनार छि। ते हरिनि, समस्त अर्थनी प्रापतिनि अर्थि निरंतर भजू छू सप्तरिषनू ये सदाचार जेणि अनूमीत। वली शू ते जणावू। ये आरंभ निरविघ्न समाप्ति करवानि अर्थि श्रीभागवतपदि करीने श्री कृष्णकीर्तन आचरूं छूं।"

Illustrated Ms. with Gujarati Prose-commentary.

Out of several Mss. studied by me, the most interesting is the one copied about 200 years ago in Ahmedabad, with about 50 miniatures which are illustrative of the text. The Ms. is important from the point of calligraphy as well; because the art of writing, then practised in Gujarati can be known from this Ms.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa cult in Gujarat.

It is significant that good many Mss. of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, either with the Sanskrit *ṭīkā* or with the Gujarati prose-commentary are met with in Gujarat. Gujarat, with its famous pilgrim-centres of Prabhāsa–Pattan and Dwarka, intimately connected with the cult of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has been specially associated with various forms of Vaiṣṇavism.

The spread of Jayadeva's '*Gīta-Govinda*' in Gujarat within a few years of its composition,[1] and the broad-casting of Vaiṣṇava works of Bilvamaṅgala such as '*Kṛṣṇa-Karṇāmṛta*' and '*Bāla-gopāla-Stuti*' and others in Western India is explainable only as a result of constant pilgrimages undertaken by saints. It is a fact that Lord Caitanya first heard of '*Bhakti-Rasāyana*' of Nṛsiṃha Muni when he had been to Dwarka. This work, it is said, he carried with him.

Illustrated Ms. of the Bhakti-Ratnāvali from Gujarat.

The find of an illustrated Ms. of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* with a Gujarati prose-commentary adds one more to that class of valuable Sanskrit works, which bear on Bhakti, and are illustrated in language of the folk-art.

Illustrated Brahmanical texts.

Illustrated Sanskrit Mss. are generally rare. Those of *Gītā*, *Bhāgavata*, *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṃśa*, *Devī-Māhātmya*, *Saundaryalaharī*, *Gīta-govinda* and *Bāla-gopāla-stuti*—are some of the well-known specimens of the Brahmanical Sanskrit works

1. *Vide* the inscription, dated Saṃvat 1348 of Sāraṅgadeva's reign containing the *daśāvatāra-Stuti* verse as the beginning verse: reproduced in "A 15th century Gītagovinda Ms. with Gujarati Paintings": *Bombay University Journal*, May 1938, by M. R. Majmudar.

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of devotional or religious themes, which are embellished with miniature-paintings of varying artistic value.

Style of Miniatures in the Gujarati Ms.

The illuminated Ms. of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*, illustrating some of the incidents from the text coming as it does from Gujarat proper, makes it evident that the style of these miniature-paintings is the one that was prevalant in Gujarat in the 18th century. This brings the art of Miniature-painting in Gujarat down to the time of contemporary Mughal and Rajput schools.

The colophon.

The unexplored archives of several Hindu temples and of families of traditional learning in Gujarat promise to amply repay the labours of the explorer. The Ms. of the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* was copied by Bhatta Kṛpārāma, the son of Kubera of the Śrīmāli section of Brahmins in Ahmedabad, on Sunday, the 7th of the dark-half of the month Fālguna in Saṃvat 1806 (*i.e.*, 1750 A.D.), nearly two hundred years ago.[1] The place of copying this MS. is the same as that of the '*Vasanta-Vilāsa*' which was copied (in Saṃvat 1507) at this place exactly three hundred years ago.

History of the find.

This Ms. had, by a chance passed on to the hands of (the late) Śrī Fulāśaṅkara Mahārāja, a religious preacher, with a considerable following, hailng from Cambay (Central Gujarat), since settled in Benares. Through the intervention of a friend, the Ms. was secured from him, for my study, principally of the miniatures. The Ms. I could identify as the '*Bhakti-Ratnāvalī*' of Saint Viṣṇu Purī.

Nature of the Miniatures.

The manuscript contains original Sanskrit text on the left-hand margin, and a running commentary in Gujarati archaic prose on the right-hand side, interspersed with miniatures, illustrative of the text. The Ms. measures $10\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{1}{2}''$, leaving a panel of 2 inches for Sanskrit text, and 6 inches for the Gujarati commentary. The panels for the miniatures are of varying size according to the requirements of the artist; but they are nowhere more than 6 inches in length. Practically only the Gujarati portion of the Ms. is interspersed with miniatures. The pages are decorated with floral designs on all the sides.

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1. The colophon :—"इति श्री भक्तिरत्नावल्यां त्रयोदशमु विरचन समाप्त १३ । श्री विष्णुपुरी ग्रथितायां श्री भागवतामृताब्धिलब्ध श्री भगवत रत्नावल्यां संपूर्ण । श्री संवत १८०६ वर्षे फाल्गुन मासे कृष्णपक्षे सप्तमी रविवासरे श्री अमदावादवासि श्रीमाली ज्ञाती भट कुबेरात्मज कृपारामेन लिखितंमिदं पुस्तकं । मंगलं लेखकानां च पाठकानां च मंगलं । मंगलं सर्व प्राणीनां मंगलं जय मंगलं । श्री रामाय नमः । श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु । "

PLATE I

Saint Nārada speaks : "Just as pouring of water at the root of a tree reaches also the trunk and its branches, and just as the food given to the stomach nourishes the limbs of the body, similarly the worship of God Accyuta appeases all the gods."

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1. The colophon :—"इति श्री भक्तिरत्नावल्यां त्रयोदशसु विरचन समास १३ । श्री [illegible] श्री भगवत रत्नावल्यां संपूर्ण । श्री संवत १८०६ [illegible] फाल्गुन [illegible] कृष्णपक्षे सप्तमी रविवासरे श्री अमदावादवासि श्रीमाली ज्ञाती भट कुबेरात्मज [illegible] । मंगलं लेखकानां च पाठकानां च मंगलं । मंगलं सर्व प्राणिनां [illegible] । श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु ।"

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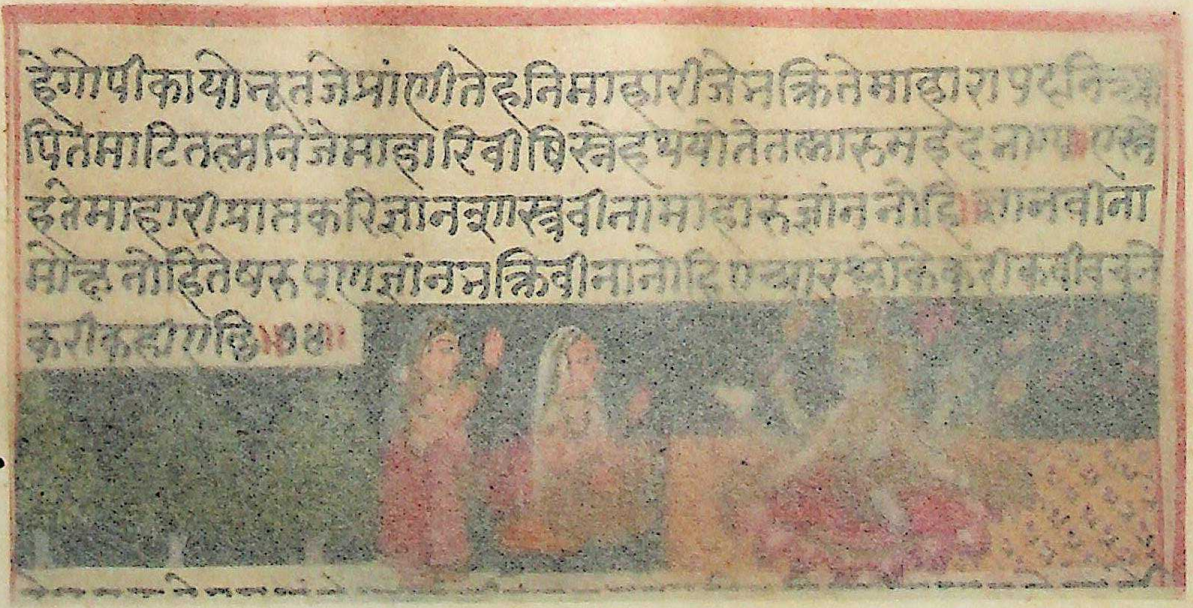
PLATE II



Lord Kṛṣṇa says to the Gopis : " Devotion of beings towards me makes them immortal. It is good luck that you are devoted to me. There is no Salvation without real Knowledge, and no Knowledge without real Devotion."

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PLATE II

Lord Krishna says to the Gopis : " Devotion to pairs towards me makes them immortal.
It is good just that you are devoted to me. There is no distinction without real knowledge, says to me Devotion."

हेगोपीकायोन्नतजेप्रांणीतेहनिमाहारीजेभक्तितेमाहारापदनित्र्या
पितेमाटितह्मनिजेमाहारिवीषिस्नेहथयोतेतह्मारुमहदभाग्य॥एस्ने
हतेमाहारीप्राप्तकरिज्ञानशास्त्रवीनामाहारुज्ञांननोहि॥ज्ञानवीना
मोक्षनोहितेषरुपणज्ञांनभक्तिवीनानोहिएच्यारश्लोकेकरीकवीवचने
करीकहीएछि॥७४॥

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PLATE III

Lord speaks : "Just as a man struggling for life while being drowned, is saved only if he is rescued by a sound ship : similarly the human soul, while being tossed over the stormy ocean of life and passing through births, high and low, saves itself only by seeking the resort of a real Saint."

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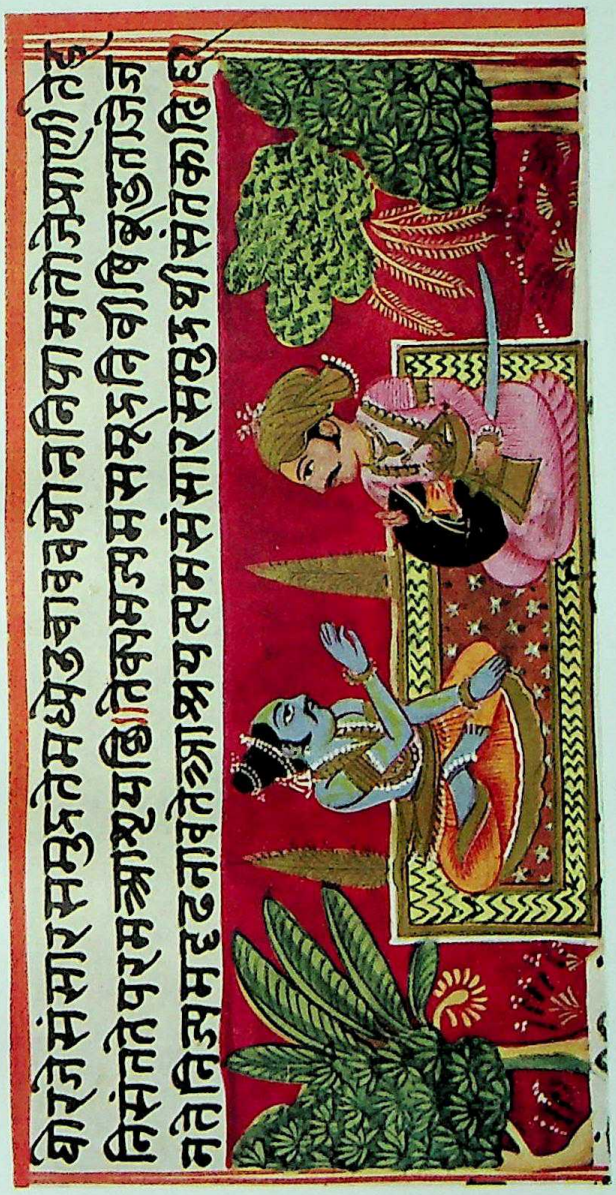

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PLATE IV

King Parikṣita, the attentive listener to Ṛiṣi Ṣukadeva's exposition of the Bhāgavata.

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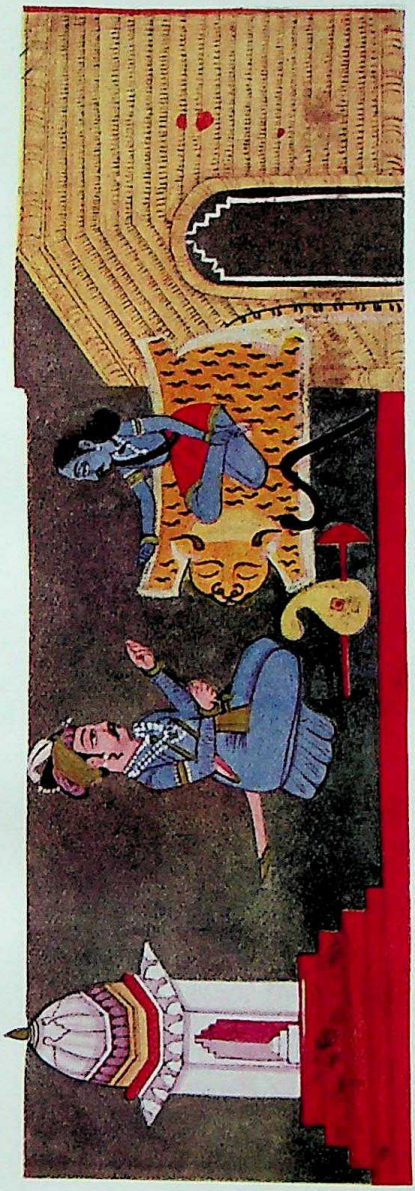

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PLATE V

Devout Uddhava and Akrura saluting Śṛi Kṛṣṇa, with all the humility of a Bhakta.

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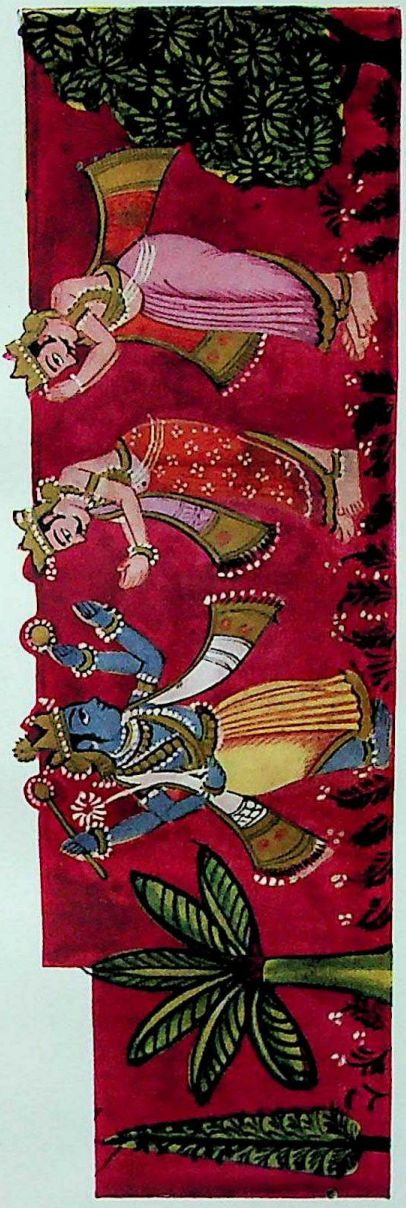

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PLATE VI

Śrī Rāma, with Sītā near him, Hanumāna in front and Lakṣmaṇa at the back, symbolising devotion of wife to her husband, of brother to brother, and of servant to his master.

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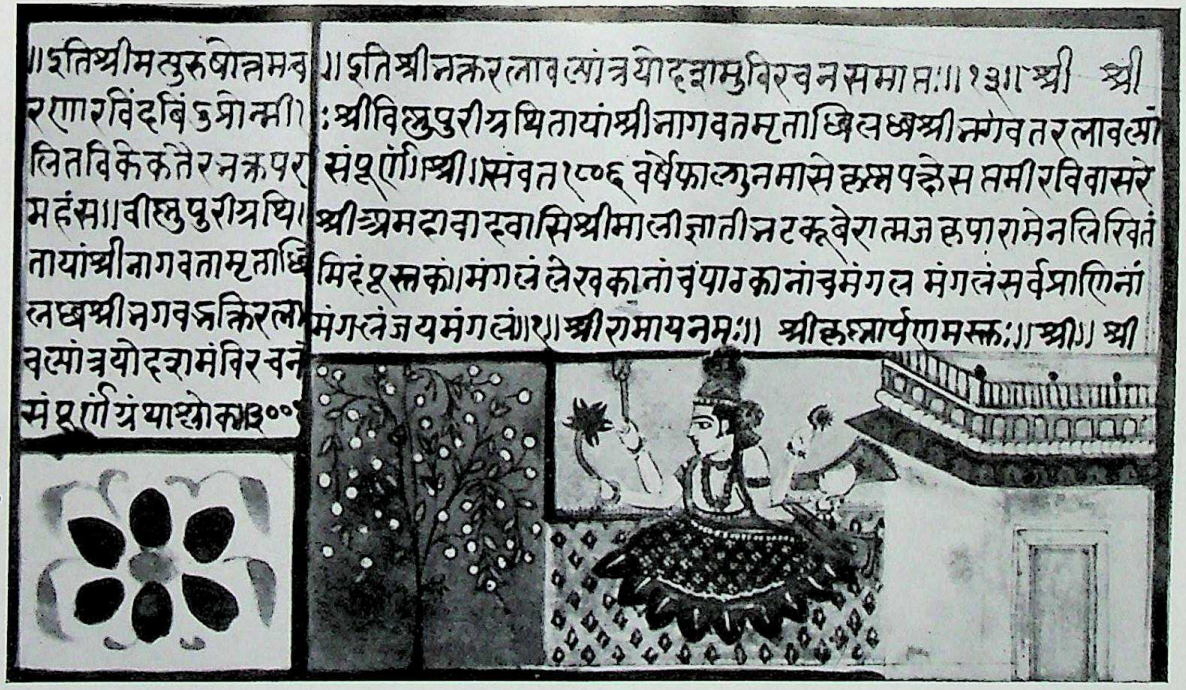

The colophon of the Illustrated Bhakti-Ratnāvalī Ms., with Gujarati prose-commentary, dated Saṁvat 1806 (1750 A.D.) and copied in Ahmedabad.

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Style of paintings.

The decadent Mughal and Rajput schools of painting are in evidence in these miniatures ; however at some places the dress, the landscape and other technique helps one to identify them as belonging to the indigenous Gujarati style of painting, which was in demand in those days. May these illustrations of some of the most interesting persons and scenes from the *Bhāgavata*, help us to appreciate better the lustre of the important gems strung together in the *Bhakti-Ratnāvalī* by Saint Viṣṇu Purī !

Acknowledgment of help from the University.

In conclusion, I have the pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to the University of Bombay for the substantial help it has been granting towards the cost of conducting this research work and publishing the results thereof with suitable reproductions of the original.

M. R. MAJMUDAR.

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BALLEGAVI

The country of Banawase was the garden of ancient Karnatak; and Ballegavi, its capital, was the pride of Kannadigas. At present, Ballegavi is a small village in Shikaripur Taluka in Shimoga District belonging to Mysore State. In the inscriptions it is referred to as Balipur, Ballipur, Balipur and Balligrama, and similar several other variants. It is popularly believed to have been so named after the demon, Bali. But it is more probable that it was called Ballegavi because it was the capital of Banawase—the land of gardens—and was itself a city of parks which had a luxuriant growth of twigs (ಬಳ್ಳಿಗಳ ಗ್ರಾಮ). It was as it were the epitome of ancient Karnatak, and was rich in temples, tanks and gardens which have been the evident characteristics of Karnatak Culture and Civilization. Even now, the relics of these things are to be seen at Ballegavi. Banawase is variously described in the inscriptions, and I cannot proceed further without quoting one or two passages from them.

ಇದುಸುಖದಾಗರಂ ಸಿರಿಯಪುಟ್ಟಿದ ಸಾಗರವಾರಯ್ಯಲ್ ಸಮು |
ಭ್ಯುದಯದ ಗೊತ್ತು ಸತ್ಯದ ತವರ್ಮನೆ ಚಿತ್ತಜನಿರ್ಕೆ ದಾಣವು ||
ನ್ಮದ ಯುವತೀ ಜನಂಗಳೆಲೆವಟ್ಟು ಬುಧಾಳಿಯ ಜನ್ಮಭೂಮಿಯೆಂ |
ಬುದನೆನೆ ಶೋಭೆಯಂ ತಳೆದುದಿಂತನಿಶಂ ಬನವಾಸಿಮಂಡಲಂ ||

(Davangeri Inscription No. 35.)

(It was the home of happiness. It was the ocean where Laxmi, the goddess of wealth, was born. It was the abode of prosperity, truth and of the learned people. It was a royal fillet for the young maidens and the residence of the god of love. Such was Banawase, the beautiful).

ಫಲಭರದಿಂ ಮನಂಗೊಳಿಪ ಪೂಗವನಂ ವನದೊಳ್ ಸರೋಜಲಂ |
ಜಲದ ಪೊನಲ್ಗಳಿಂ ಬೆಳೆದು ಕತ್ತಲಿಸಿರ್ಪೆಲೆವಳ್ಳಿ ಬಳ್ಳಿಗೊಂ ||
ಡುಲಿವ ಪಿಕಂ ಪಿಕಧ್ವನಿಗಳಿಂ ನಲಿದಾಡುವನಂಗನಂಗನಾ |
ಕುಲಮದೆ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಗೆ ಸಮೃದ್ಧಕರಂ ಬನವಾಸೆ ದೇಶದೋಳ್ ||

(Soraba Inscription No. 277.)

(The land of Banawase was full of gardens of Araca trees, pleasing to the eye with the weight of their nuts, with lakes, the gardens and the thick foliage of the creepers, the sweet melodies of the cuckoo, and with the groups of young maidens roaming about.)

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A 15th CENTURY GĪTAGOVINDA MS. WITH GUJARĀTĪ PAINTINGS

Affinities of the Gujarātī school of miniature-painting.

1. Strictly analogous to the mediæval painting of Bengal and Nepal is that of the illustrated Ms. of the Gujarātī school. The stylistic affinities of the Gujarātī painting are also visible in the frescoes at Elūrā and at Pagān (Burma), though they have no direct relationship with each other, except as they derive from an older common Indian tradition.

Duration of pure Gujarātī school.

2. A Gujarātī school of Ms. illustration flourished from the 12th to the 17th century, after which it was more or less modified by Mūghal and Rājput influences, the significance of the style being over by that time.

A continuation of the school of "Ancient West."

3. The provinces of Gujarāt and Rajputānā are probably the region which the Buddhist historian Tārānāth (writing in 1608) refers to as the home of the school of "Ancient West," which was represented by the famous painter Śṛṅgadhar of Marū or Mārwār, in the 7th century. Gujarātī painting is thus no doubt in the direct line of descent of the older fresco-paintings, and a continuation of the early western style, representing an intermediate stage in the development of Indian painting.

Vaiṣṇava Ms. of the Gītagovinda with Gujarātī miniatures.

4. The discovery of the illustrated paper-Ms of the Gītagovinda in the Gujarātī style, with miniatures in the style of the Kalpasūtras and the Vasanta Vilāsa—probably the earliest known specimen of Hindu miniatures on the subject—is important, inasmuch as it provides one more document, testifying to the prevalence of the common provincial tradition of miniature-painting in Western India, which not only is outside the Jaina Śvetāmbara environment, but is positively Vaiṣṇava in its theme.

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Vaiṣṇava miniatures of the Bālagopāla Stuti, in the Gujarātī style.

5. The early Vaiṣṇava miniatures of the Bālagopāla Stuti by Bilva Maṅgala in the Gujarāti style,—another specimen of a non-Jaina subject-matter—now available in as many as *four* different series, and all worked out in an identical style—are too well known to need repetition here.[1]

Source.

6. The present Ms. comes from the collection of my friend Pandit Bālā Shankar Bhattajī Agnihotri, who is a descendant from an old learned family, and who is the hereditary priest of the Kālikā Mātā temple, on Pāvāgadh Hill, to the east of Gujarāt. It is through his courtesy that it has been possible to publish these unique miniatures.

Incomplete condition of the Ms.

7 The Gītagovinda Ms. is limited to 102 folios, stopping short at the end of the eleventh *sarga* and is thus incomplete. It is, therefore, to be deplored that not only the colophon but also the possible miniatures of the remaining four of the ten *avatāras*—those subsequent to Parśurāma, viz. Rāma, Balarāma, Buddha and Kalki—are not traceable. There is, however, an extra folio at the beginning, (vide Plate IV) containing in two panels—the figure probably of Gaṇeśa to the left which is missing, and of Sarasvatī (Śāradā) to the right, with the following verse :

"जेतुं यस्त्रिपुरं हरेण हरिणा व्याजाद् बलिं बध्नता ।
स्रष्टुं चांबुभवोद्भवेन भुवनं शेषेण धर्तुं धरां ॥
ध्यातः पंचशरेण विश्वजितये सिद्धाधिपैर्मुक्तये ।
पार्वत्या महिषासुरप्रमथने जीयात्स नागाननः ॥

Ṭippaṇikā by King Mānāṅka.

8. The other noteworthy feature of the Ms. is the short commentary (*ṭippaṇikā*) by King Mānāṅka, which is hitherto unpublished, though several Mss. of the same are mentioned in Mss. Catalogues. The

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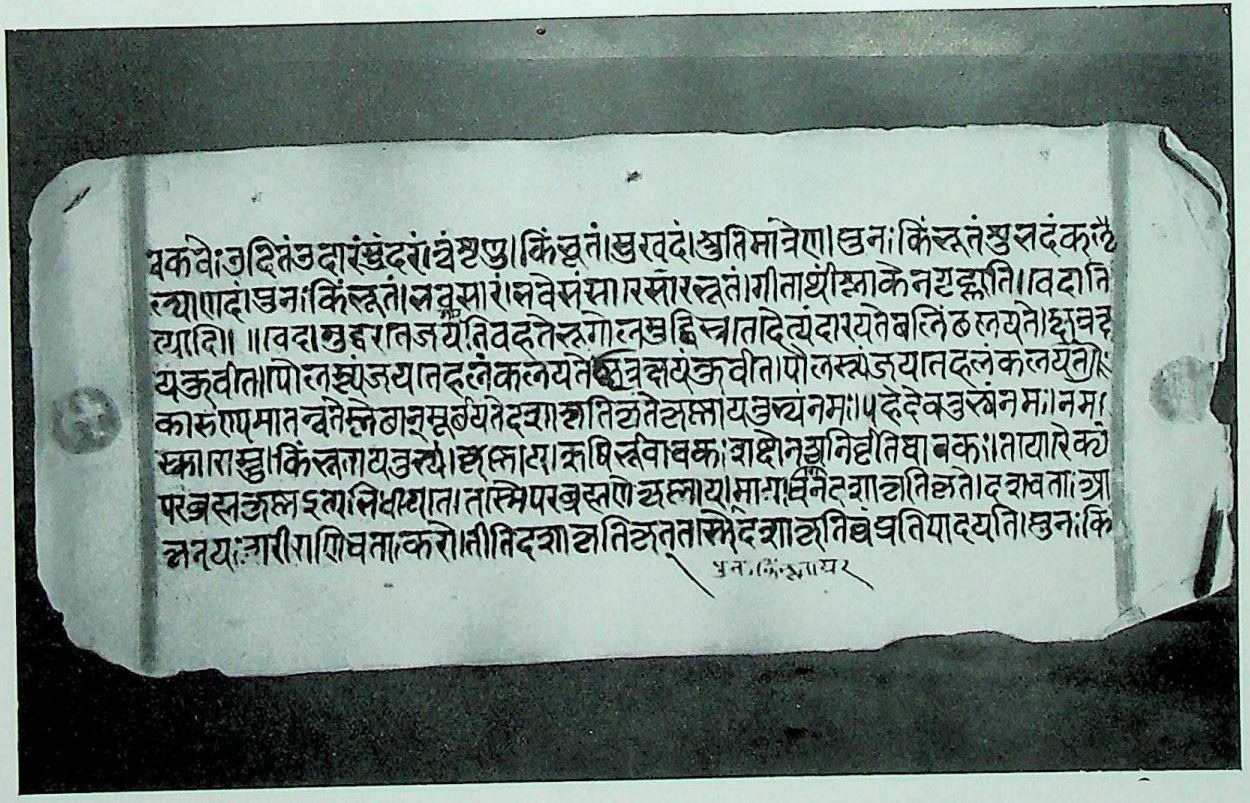
1. O. C. GANGOLI :
   (1) "A newly discovered illustrated Indian Ms."—*Andhra Historical Research Society Journal*, Vol. IV, (1929)
   (2) *Indian Arts and Letters*, Vol. IV, No. 2, New Series, (1932)
   (3) *Mālaviā Commemoration Volume*, (1932).

   W. N. BROWN, Prof. :
   (1) 'Early Vaiṣṇava Miniatures', *Eastern Art*, Philadelphia, pp. 167-208, (1930).

   M. R. MAJMUDAR :
   (1) "Some Illustrated Mss. of the Gujarātī School of Painting" *VII All-India Oriental Conference Proceedings*, pp. 827-835, announcing three new sets, (1933).



A folio from the *Gītagovinda* Ms. containing the *daśāvatāra-stuti* verse, the subject-matter of the paintings.

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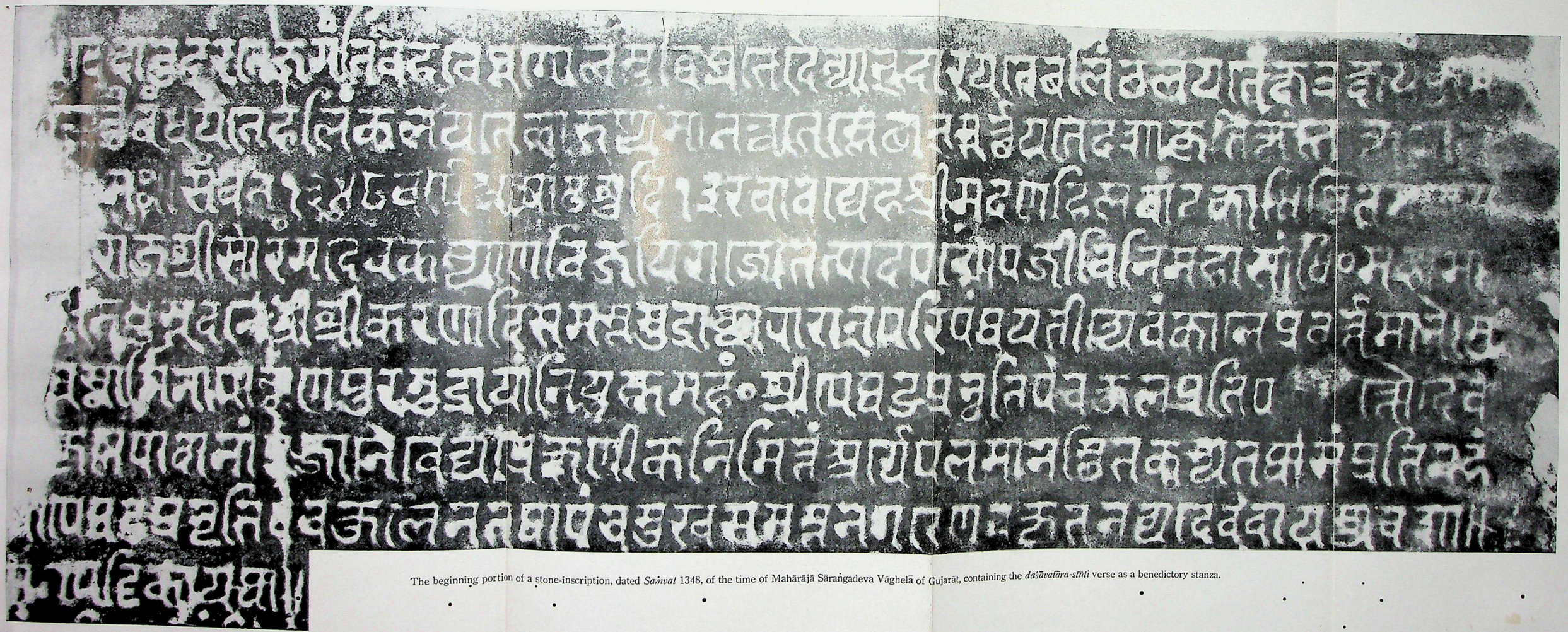

The beginning portion of a stone-inscription, dated *Saṁvat* 1348, of the time of Mahārājā Sāraṅgadeva Vāghelā of Gujarāt, containing the *daśāvatāra-stuti* verse as a benedictory stanza.

Through the courtesy of the Archaeological Department, Baroda State]

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only information that we get about the commentator is from the following introductory verses :

"चराणां स्थावराणां च येन सृष्टिः कृता पुरा ।
(v. l. येन ज्ञातं चराचरं ।)
सर्वज्ञाय नमस्तस्मै ज्ञानदात्रेऽच्युतात्मने ॥
(v. l. ज्ञानदायाच्युतात्मने) ॥ १ ॥
कवीनां मतिमालोक्य सतां च सुखबृद्धये ।
(v. l. मत ।) (v. l सुखबुद्धये ।)
कृता 'टिप्पणिका' मुख्या मानांकेन महीभुजा ॥ २ ॥
(v. l. टिप्पनिका)
प्रीतये वासुदेवस्य सद्यः पापविमुक्तये ।
गीतगोविंदकं काव्यं जयदेवश्चकार ह ॥ ३ ॥
यस्यायमाद्यः श्लोकः । मेघैरिति ।" etc.

King Mānāṅka, the commentator.

9. After saluting the creator of the world, both moving and stationary, King Mānāṅka states that having kept the intent of the poet in view, he has written this gloss, mostly on important points. Jayadeva composed the poem of Gītagovinda, for securing the love of Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) and for the immediate expiation of all sins. With this much introduction, the commentator starts his commentary.

Probable date.

10. It can be surmised that King Mānāṅka must have flourished some time after the 12th century, which is the date of composition of the Gītagovinda and before the early 15th century, which is the probable date of the Ms. under consideration. The style of the miniatures and the calligraphy and the presence of vestigial red dots on the Ms., marking the transition from palm-leaf to paper, are the grounds which help us in assigning the probable date of the Ms. The exact date of the Ms. cannot be known, it being incomplete ; but because of the appearance of the page itself, of the fact that writing is not so large as in typical 16th century (or late 15th century) Kalpasūtras and it appears on the page in eight instead of seven lines, because also of the use of red in the back-grounds of the paintings, without blue, and of the simplicity of the stringhole and marginal numeral rubrications, the Ms. should be assigned to the first half of the 15th century.[1]

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1. *Vide* W. Norman Brown's article on "Stylistic varieties of Early Western Indian miniature-painting, about 1400 A.D."—*Journal of Ind. Soc. of Ori. Art.*, Vol. V, 1937 : p. 6.

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Size.

11. The size of the folio is 10·2″ × 4·5″ with 8 lines in a page, the size of the panel reserved for the miniatures being 4·2″ × 4·5″, in 5 of the 7 miniatures, the remaining two being 3·5″×4·5″ and 2·5″×4·5″.

Dots.

12. The Ms. is copied in the style of the palm-leaf, because on two sides of the folio, little round dots in red colour, indicating the hole for binding the string are marked, surviving here as a mere vestigial ornament. It is noteworthy that these dots on the folios containing the miniatures have been made a bit ornamental and artistic. The Ms. is, therefore, assignable to a period when paper had just begun to come in vogue, and when palm-leaves were becoming rare.[1]

Calligraphy.

13. Few Brāhmanical works are met with, with such a fineness in handwriting. The Ms. is written in a uniform well-balanced hand, with occasional flourishes in certain letters, and throughout it contains 8 lines on a page. (Plate I). The use of the *pṛṣṭamātrā*,—which is discernible in the inscription, bearing a verse from Gītagovinda, as also in the Old Gujarati prose gloss and the stencil-folios—is also to be noticed in the Ms. The spelling of गोविंद as गोव्यंद at the end of each *sarga* of the work (Vide Plate IX) is the weak .point in the scribe, when he writes as इति श्री गीतगोव्यंद टीकायां सर्ग: । ", which is however in accordance with the stigma on the Gujarātīs. Cf. : गुर्जराणां मुखं भ्रष्टम् । in *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhābharaṇa.*

Pure Gujarātī style of the Miniatures.

14. The pure Gujarātī style of the extant miniatures, leaves absolutely no doubt as to the probable date of the Ms., which cannot be later than the middle of the 15th century. It is thus the earliest illustrated Ms. of the Gītagovinda in India, so far known to us.

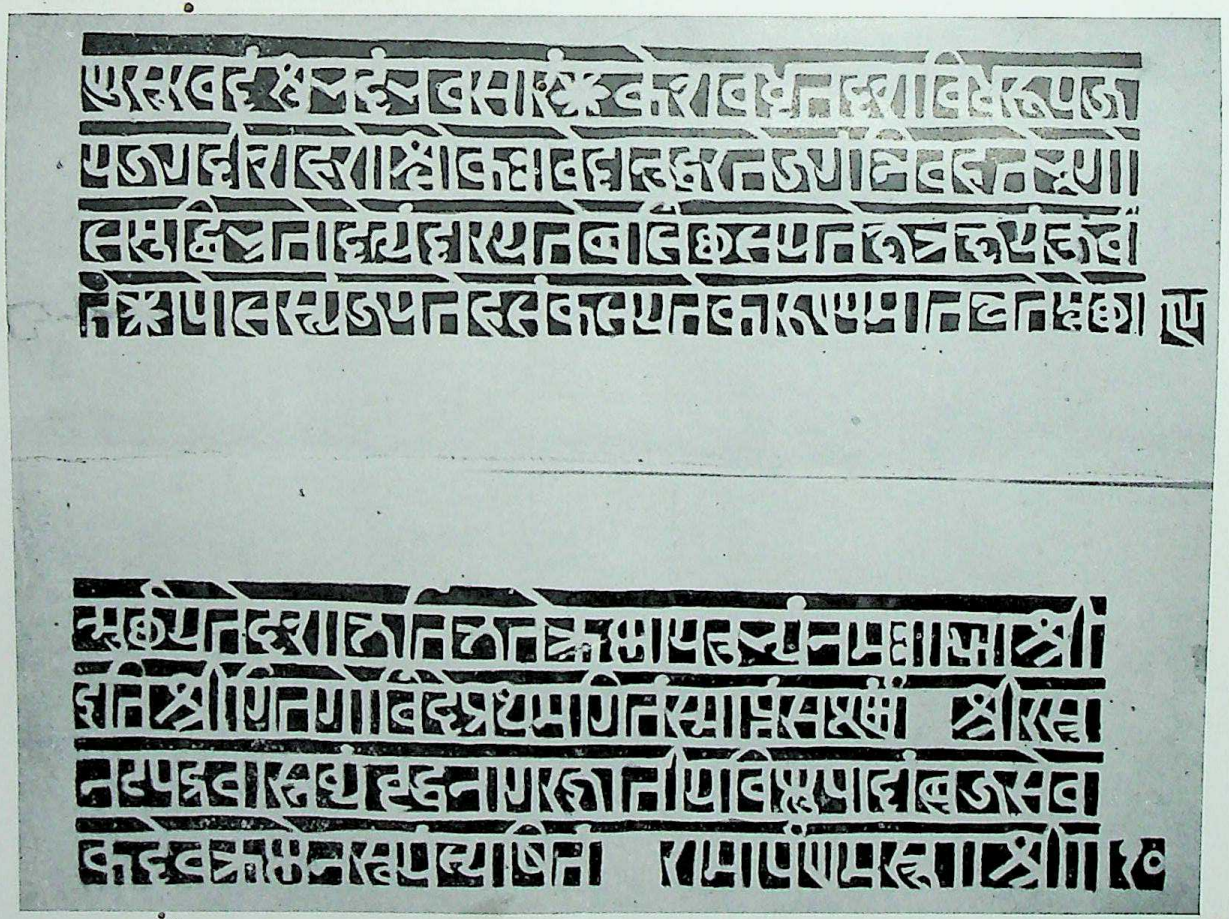
The Gītagovinda.

15. The Gītagovinda—the song celestial in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa —by Jayadeva (died 1120 A.D.), the court-poet of king Lakṣmaṇasena is akin to the 'Song of Songs' of Solomon, in the Old Testament. The subject of this lyrical drama is the love of Kṛṣṇa for the beautiful cowherdess Rādhā, the estrangement of their loves and their final reconciliation.

The fourfold interpretation.

16. There are four aspects in which the Gītagovinda is viewed by Indian readers : (i) literary, (ii) devotional, (iii) musical, and (iv) mystical. All these views combined have led to the wide popularity of the

1. For an interesting note on such dots, see Dr. Stella Kramrisch's article on "An Illuminated Gīta-Govinda Ms."—*Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, December 1934, p. 117.



2 folios from the paper-stencil copy of the *Gīta-govinda* containing the *daśāvatāra-stuti* verse, and the colophon.
[Oriental Institute Collection, Baroda]

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PLATE IV

Śāradā

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PLATE VI

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poem, all over India. The ten incarnations of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa are of universal acceptance among the Hindus : and thus the popularity of the Gītagovinda on this score has not suffered in the least in spite of its śṛṅgāric note—the sensualism in full bloom—woven in sweet words of exquisite music.

Appeal of the Gītagovinda on the devotional side.

17. It appears from what has gone before that only the devotional side of Gītagovinda had found greater appeal in Gujarāt, especially the portion relating to the ten incarnations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Jayadeva, too, is looked upon more as a *bhakta* rather than as a *poet*, as he figures in Nābhāji's '*Bhaktamālā*'.

A verse from the Gītagovinda, inscribed in a stone-inscription from Gujarāt, dated Saṃvat 1348.

18. The early popularity of the Gītagovinda in Gujarāt is discernible in a stone-inscription[1] of Mahārājā Sāraṅgdeva Vāghelā of Aṇahillapattan, dated Vikram year 1348 (1291 A.D.) which records the levying of a revised tax from the inhabitants of Pālhanapura (modern Palanpur) to defray the expenses of the *naivedya, pūja, prekṣaṇiyaka,* etc. (offerings, worship, dramatic performances, etc.) of Lord Kṛṣṇa installed there in an ancient temple.

The *daśāvatāra* stanza, with a variant.

19. This inscription which is in Nāgarī script with the use of *Pṛṣthamātra* begins with a salutation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is no other than the last verse of the first canto of the Gītagovinda in *Śārdūla-vikrīḍita* metre : The stanza as read in the inscription[2] is as follows : (Plate II).

वेदानुद्धरते जगंति वहते भूगोलमुद्बिभ्रते ।
दैत्यान् दारयते बलिं छलयते क्षत्रक्षयं कुर्वते ॥
[3] सेतुं बन्धयते हलिं कलयते कारुण्यमातन्वते ।
म्लेच्छान्मूर्च्छयते दशाकृतिकृते कृष्णाय तुभ्यं नमः ॥

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1. This inscription found early in 1904 from Ānāvādā, the site of the old Aṇahillapātaka, a village near Pattan (N. Gujarat) is now preserved at the Baroda Museum. It was first noticed in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XLI (1912).

2. The relevant portion of the estampage of the inscription is reproduced, through the courtesy of Dr. Hirānand Shāstri, the Director of Archæology, Baroda State under permission of the Baroda Government.

3. The current text has the following two variants which are noteworthy : 'पौलस्त्यं जगते' for 'सेतुं बन्धयते,' and 'हलं कलयते' for 'हलिं कलयते'.

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The fact that this benedictory stanza is quoted as the invocatory verse in the inscription, shows that the work composed in the last quarter of the 12th century had already become quasi-sacred within a century.

Daśāvatāra-Stuti recognising Kṛṣṇa as Supreme God.

20. This verse refers to the following ten incarnations in order: Matsya, Kachhapa, Varāha, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Balarāma, and Kalki; and then establishes the identity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with all these *avatāras*, whose manifestations they were, according to poet Jayadeva. The verse, evidently, sums up the purport of the *daśāvatāra-stuti* song in the first *sarga*. One remarkable thing about this stanza is that even though Kṛṣṇa does not find a place in the list of the ten incarnations, the poet concludes that Kṛṣṇa is the spirit of these ten *avatāras*.

Cultural unity in India.

21. From the above-noted inscription, we see that within less than one century from the composition of the Gītagovinda, it is found to have travelled to distant lands—from the east to the west of India—so much so that one of its verses has been immortalised having been inscribed in stone. This points out how the cultural unity of India continued to be fundamentally one and undivided.

Centres of Hindu culture.

22. Moreover, Gujarāt with its famous pilgrim-centres of Prabhāsapattan and Dwārakā is intimately connected with the cult of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, where the ever-moving caravans of pilgrims from all parts of India used to bring with them devotional songs and sweet prayers, which were easily exchanged and broadcasted at such centres of Hindu culture. This partly explains how the Vaiṣṇava work of Jayadeva came to be made known to this part of India, through such agencies.

Mention of Jayadeva in a poem by Narasiṁha Mehtā, (early 15th century).

23. The next significant mention of the poet and Vaiṣṇava saint Jayadeva that we come across in Gujarāt is in the Vaiṣṇava work of poet Narasiṁha Mehtā (early 15th century A.D.) styled *"Sūrata-Saṁgrāma"*, which narrates in a forcible style, a sham fight between Kṛṣṇa and his companions on one side, and Rādhā and her friends on the other. During the course of the fight, a character of a Viṣṭikāra, to carry negotiations on behalf of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's side, has been introduced by Narasiṁha Mehtā, in the person of Jayadeva, the

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PLATE V.

The Matsyāvatāra

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Mention of Jayadeva in a poem by Narasiṁha Mehtā, (early 15th century)

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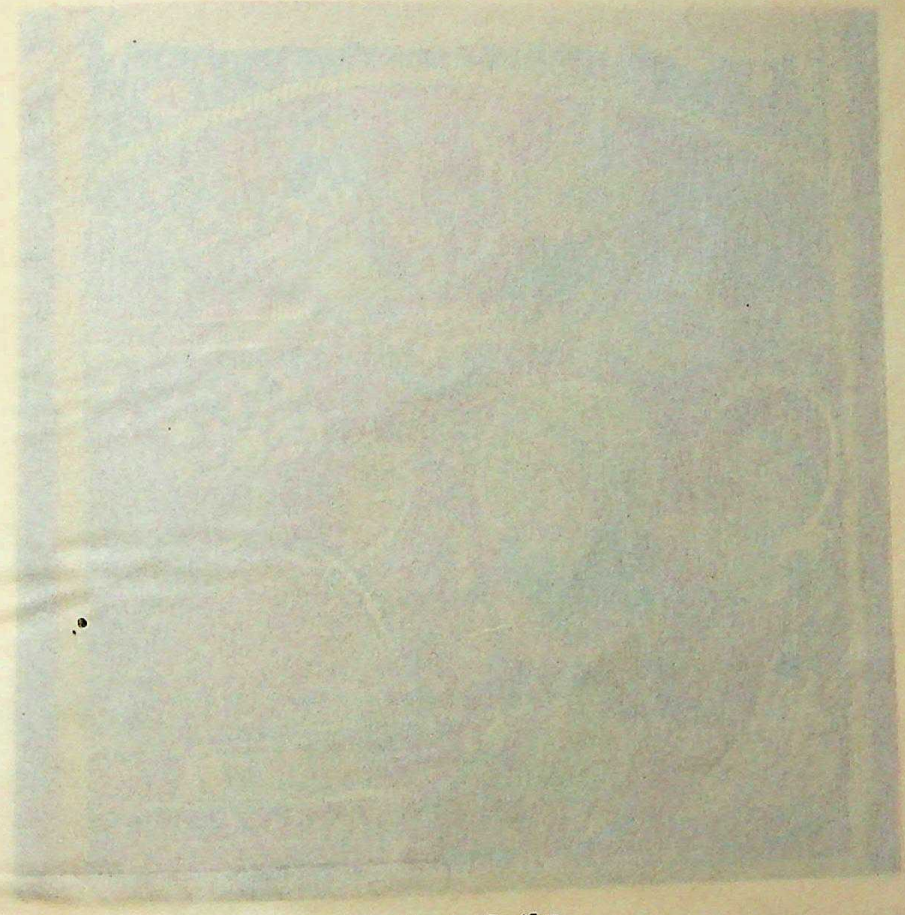
PLATE VI



The Kacchapāvatāra

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PLATE VI

The Kacchapāvatāra

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author of the Gītagovinda.[1] The Gujarāti poem is also reminiscent of several phrases of Jayadeva's work.

Paper-stencil copy of 1st canto of the Gītagovinda, from Gujarāt.

24. The third instance, showing the extent of popularity of the Gītagovinda in Gujarāt, is a perforated paper-stencil of the first canto (No. 1305 of the Baroda Oriental Institute collection), consisting of 10 folios, meant to be read on one side only, measuring $9\frac{1}{8}'' \times 4''$, the rectangle containing the lettering being $7\frac{7}{8}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$. (Plate III).

Information from the colophon : on the 10th folio.

25. The subject-matter of the stencil-work is the first canto of the Gītagovinda, containing the *daśāvatāra stuti*. The calligraphic artist is one Devakṛṣṇa, a member of the highest section of Brāhmins in Gujarāt—the Nāgara Brāhmins of Vṛddhanagara (the modern Vadanagar in North Gujarāt)—a resident of Natapadra (modern Nadiād in Kairā District, Central Gujarāt) who being a devotee of the feet of Viṣṇu accomplished this work, out of devotion and reverence for the Vaiṣṇava lyric of Jayadeva.[2]

Mss. of the Gītagovinda with commentaries in Sanskrit and Old Gujarāti prose.

26. Numerous Mss. of the Gītagovinda, some with Sanskrit commentaries and others with a gloss in old Gujrati prose,[3] several centuries old are met with in Gujarāt. The one Ms. with Gujarātī miniatures, under review, contains the hitherto unpublished '*Ṭippaṇikā*' (commentary) by King Mānāṅka.

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1. Cf. ... ... "कृष्ण भजतां जेणे नार खोई ।
—ए जयदेवो चालियो, मनमांहि म्हालियो, आवियो ज्यां ऊभी गोपनारी ।
राधेने पूछतो, मरडतो मूछ तो, गुप्त क्यां गोपी भ्रखनी दुलारी ?"
नरसिंह महेताकृत काव्यसंग्रह, 'गुजराती' प्रेस, (१९१२), पृ. १०१.

2. "इति श्री गि(गी)तगोविंदे प्रथम गि(गी)तं स्माप्तं संपूर्ण । श्रीरस्तु । नटेपद्रवास्तव्यं वृद्धनगरज्ञातीय विष्णुपादांबुजसेवक देवकृष्णेन स्वयं ल्य(लि)षितं । रामार्पणमस्तु । श्री ।"

3. The following extract from a Ms. copied in Samvat 1664, (O. I. Collection, Baroda) is given as a specimen, (from the end of 1st *Sarga*) :

"इति कहितां इणिपरि दशावतारवर्णन नाम कीर्तिधवला नाम पहिला प्रबंधमांनुं पहिलुं गीत ।'वेदानुद्धरते'—एहनु अर्थ । यें परमेश्वरिं मछावतार करीनिं शंखासुर दैत्य हण्यु । वेद वाल्या । कूर्मावतारिं एणिं परमेश्वरिं जगत्रय कहीई संसार पृथिवी आदिं देईनइ । सर्व पृष्ठीनइ विषि धरिऊं । जिणइं कृष्णइ शूकरनि रूप धरीनइ दंष्ट्रिनी विषि डाढाग्रे पृथवी धरीं । येहवी पूर्णिमा चंद्रिं कलंकनी कला हूई तेहवी दीसई छइ । जिणिं परमेश्वरिं नृसिंहावतारिं नखने

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27. A brief description of the contents of the extant seven miniatures (reproduction of which in original colour and size is made possible through the most liberal help of the Bombay University) is now given to convey a more exact idea of the style and manner of these Gujarāti paintings.

Description of the paintings.

28. (*i*) Plate IV (folio 1) gives the figure of a four-armed goddess. She holds in upper right hand a book, with flowers strewn over it,[1] and a *kamaṇḍalu* in the lower ; the upper left hand holds the *vīṇā*, the lower one holding a lotus-stalk. At her feet is a swan (*haṁsa*).

Śāradā.

29. (*ii*) Plate V (folio 25) The Matsyāvatāra is shown by a big size fish, seated on a circular seat, ornamented ; two small fish are shown just near, by way of contrast to the big size of the Fish-God. A typical Gujarāti lady is standing by his side, under a sort of a skyline, showing the lady on a different plane. The lady has put on pointed black shoes. Floral designs fill the gap in the composition.

The Matsyāvatāra.

30. (*iii*) Plate VI (folio 56). This miniature, depicting the Kacchapa avatāra—the Tortoise-god, is shown in two panels. The upper one either under the architectural setting or the sky-line depicts two standing ladies, facing each other, holding in one hand some offering to the Tortoise-God, the other hand resting on the waist. A pair of seven-petalled lotuses rising out from the boundary line, probably of the ocean, are placed one at each end, in a symmetrical way. The lower panel contains the Tortoise-God, seated on four legs, over a seat, to whose front two ladies with a nimbus round the face, are standing apparently with some offering of worship.

The Kacchapa avatāra.

आग्र करी। जे हण्यु हिरण्यकश्यपु दैत्य तेहनुं हईउं विडारिऊं। जिणिं परमेश्वरिं वामनरूप धरी बलिदानव छल्यु। जिणिं परमेश्वरिं परशुरामावतारिं क्षत्रीनुं वध करीनिं संसारनु भार ऊतारिऊ *। जिणि परमेश्वरिं बलभद्रनिं अवतारिं हल आयुध धरिउं। जिणि परमेश्वरिं। बौद्धावतारिं दया करी पशुयागनी निंदा कीधी। जैन्य धर्म राषिउ। जिणि परमेश्वरिं कल्किनु अवतार लेईनि म्लेच्छ हण्या। इणिपरिं परमेश्वरिं दश अवतार लीधा। तेहनिं नमस्कार। १।"

* Reference to Rāmāvatāra is left out by the scribe.

1. A similar painting of Sarasvati has been noticed by Prof. W. N. Brown in his "The Story of Kālaka" (1933, Washington) on Plate 4, Fig. 12, facing p. 122 : "The goddess bears in her upper left hand the *vīṇā*, in the upper right *an object which I cannot identify*, in the lower right the rosary and a *kamaṇḍalu*. Before her is a Swan."

The object not identified is evidently a book with flowers strewn over it, as is usual in India, where a written word is worshipped as a sacred object.

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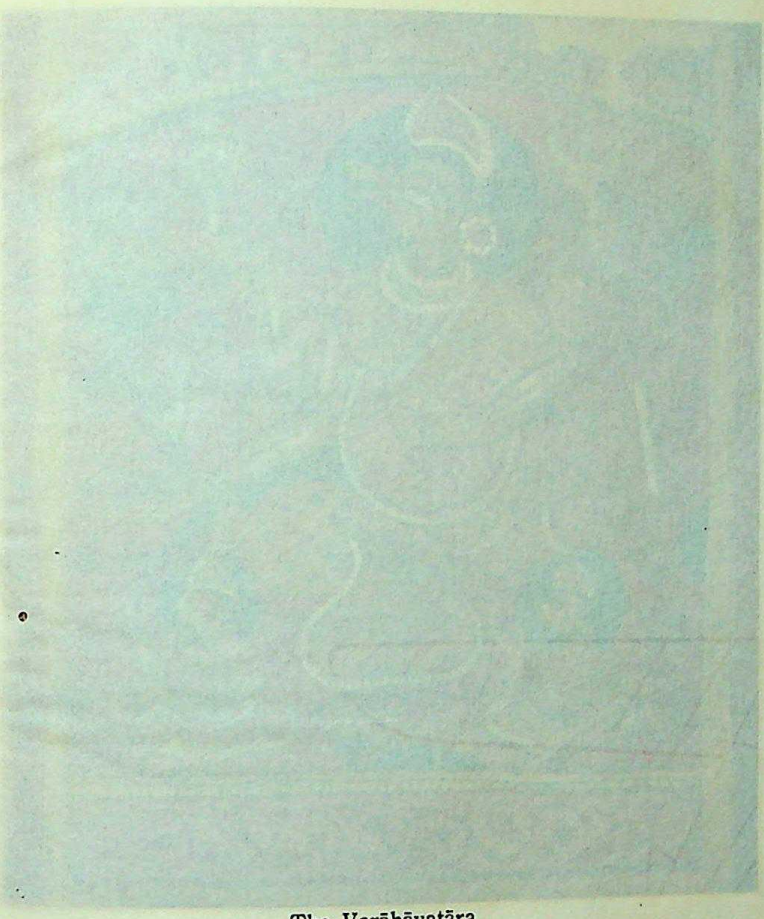
PLATE VII



The Varāhāvatāra

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PLATE VII

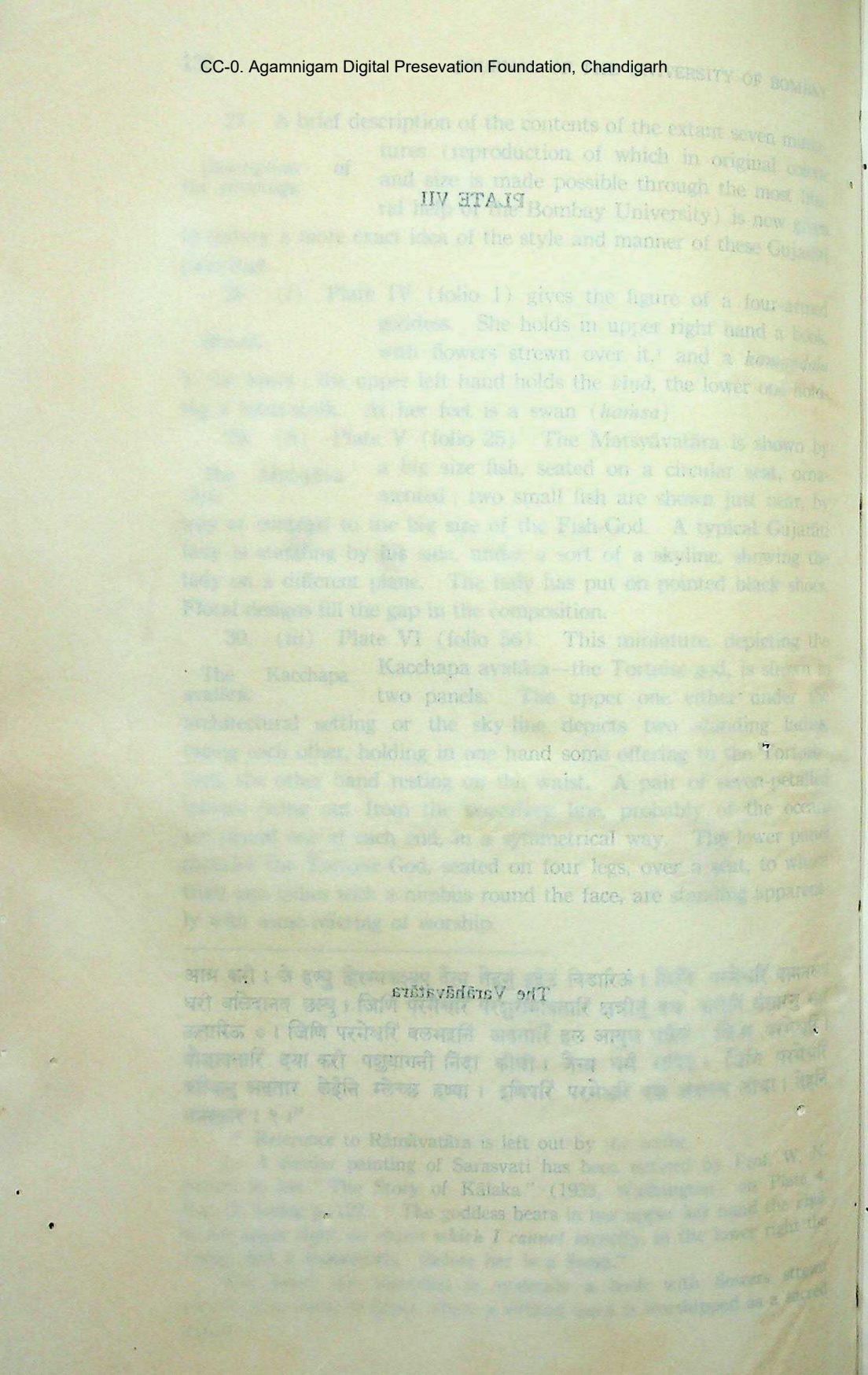

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PLATE VIII.

The Nṛsiṁhāvatāra

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PLATE VIII.

The Nṛisiṁhāvatāra

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31. (*iv*) Plate VII (folio 60) The Varāha or the Boar-incarnation (of the Nṛvarāha type) is shown seated on a vehicle which looks like a tortoise. It has four hands, and holds a *khatvāṅga*, in the upper right hand and a *triśūla* in the upper left. Out of the other two, one is resting on the knee and the other is bent towards the waist. The face of the Varāha is not realistic, but is conventional, and has a close resemblance to that of the Hariṇaigameśi yakṣa of the Jaina Kalpasūtra paintings, who transferred the embryo of Mahāvīra from Devānandā's womb to that of Triśalā. [Vide Plates XI(i) & XI(ii)]. The white line-marks probably of ashes on the arms and hands of the Varāha are unique, as being connected with the Śaivite cult. On two sides of the Varāha are shown two male figures, haloed and with a *mukuṭa* and a short beard. A lady is standing in front of the Varāha at a respectable distance, evidently on another plane.

The Varāha avatāra.

32. (*v*) Plate VIII (folio 76). The *Nṛsiṁha* (man-lion) incarnation of God comes next. Nṛsiṁha, who is dressed in a jacket with horizontal stripes, covering hands upto the arms, is shown in a terrific (*ugra*) mood. Two of his upper hands hold a club and a lotus, while the other two lower hands with sharp claws are engaged in tearing open the bowels of the poor wretch—the demon Hiraṇya-Kaśipu, who is thrown lengthwise on the lap. The demon out of terror and fright, awaiting his death every moment has turned his head aside, being unable to stand the gruesome sight of approaching death. However, the demon-king is not painted without a *mukuṭa* ; but he has no beard, and has nothing unusual about him. He looks the usual male figure of the Gujarāti miniatures ; the little boy painted like a *brahmacārī* with long hair in a knot, and having no *uttarīya* or scarf over his shoulders, is sitting by the side of Nṛsiṁha. It is no other than Prahlāda, the saintly son of the despotic demon-king. Two ladies look at Nṛsiṁha in amazement from different planes of the back-ground. The third lady standing in the picture at the lower end holds a jar, possibly of water, just to appease the anger of the man-lion. There is good action and vigour in the delineation of this avatāra.

The Nṛsiṁha avatāra.

33. (*vi*) Plate IX.(folio 79). The figure of Vāmana or the Dwarf-incarnation is not drawn in the usual traditional size of a *baṭuka*—a small boy—but is rather given in the form assumed by him, while measuring the three worlds in three strides. The contrast in size is shown by the small, haloed figure of king Bali, who is standing before him, with hands folded in a suppliant and a reverent attitude, under a separate sky-line over the head. The broad round chest of Vāmana is rather

The Vāmana avatāra.

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abnormal and exaggerated. The flying figure of a lady with a lotus in hand, running as it were to offer it out of reverence, to the Dwarf-God is very elegantly drawn. The legs show great action and haste. It reminds us of the flying figures at Ajantā.

The Paraśurāma avatāra.

34. (*vii*) Plate X (folio 82). The figure of (Paraśu) Rāma, as given in the legend on the folio, is shown sitting right royally under a gold *chhatra* or canopy. It has four hands, the two upper ones holding a club or a *cakra* (instead of the axe or *paraśu*), and a *tri-śūla* ; the lower right hand being in the *varada mudrā* and the lower left near to the waist. He too has a broad chest. Two ladies on different planes are obviously carrying some offerings. The left corner of the back-ground remaining empty, the artist filled it with a creeper bearing flowers. The portraiture of Paraśurāma is of the conventional Gujarātī type.

General characteristics of Gujarātī paintings.

35. From the details given above of the seven miniatures, we will try to draw general conclusions about the characteristic of the Gujarātī School of painting, which more or less are common to all the miniatures of this provincial phase of Indian painting, in a greater or less degree, irrespective of the creed or the subject-matter of the paintings. These Vaiṣṇava miniatures for example, have nothing to do with Jainism, but are born of the common style of expression of a folk-art, which was prevalent in Western India from the 11th century onwards.

Resemblance to the Jaina style.

36. In point of style, the miniatures in the Gītagovinda Ms. are absolutely identical with those of the Jaina religious Mss ; and it can be said, they may have been executed by some of the very same artists. The Varāha in the Varāhāvatāra miniature, is strikingly reminiscent of the Hariṇaigameshi Yakṣa, without his horns. The Yakṣa with the likeness of a hariṇa (deer) had transferred the embryo from Devānandā's womb to that of Triśalā under orders of Indra. [Plates XI(i) and XI(ii)].[1] The thumb-nail indicatory sketches in the magins, with the title of the finished miniature—these are some of the features of the Gītagovinda Ms. which are akin to those met with in the Jaina-religious Mss.

Architectural setting.

37. At the top of the miniatures are shown either architectural settings or blue lines showing the sky in the conventional manner. Floral designs in between

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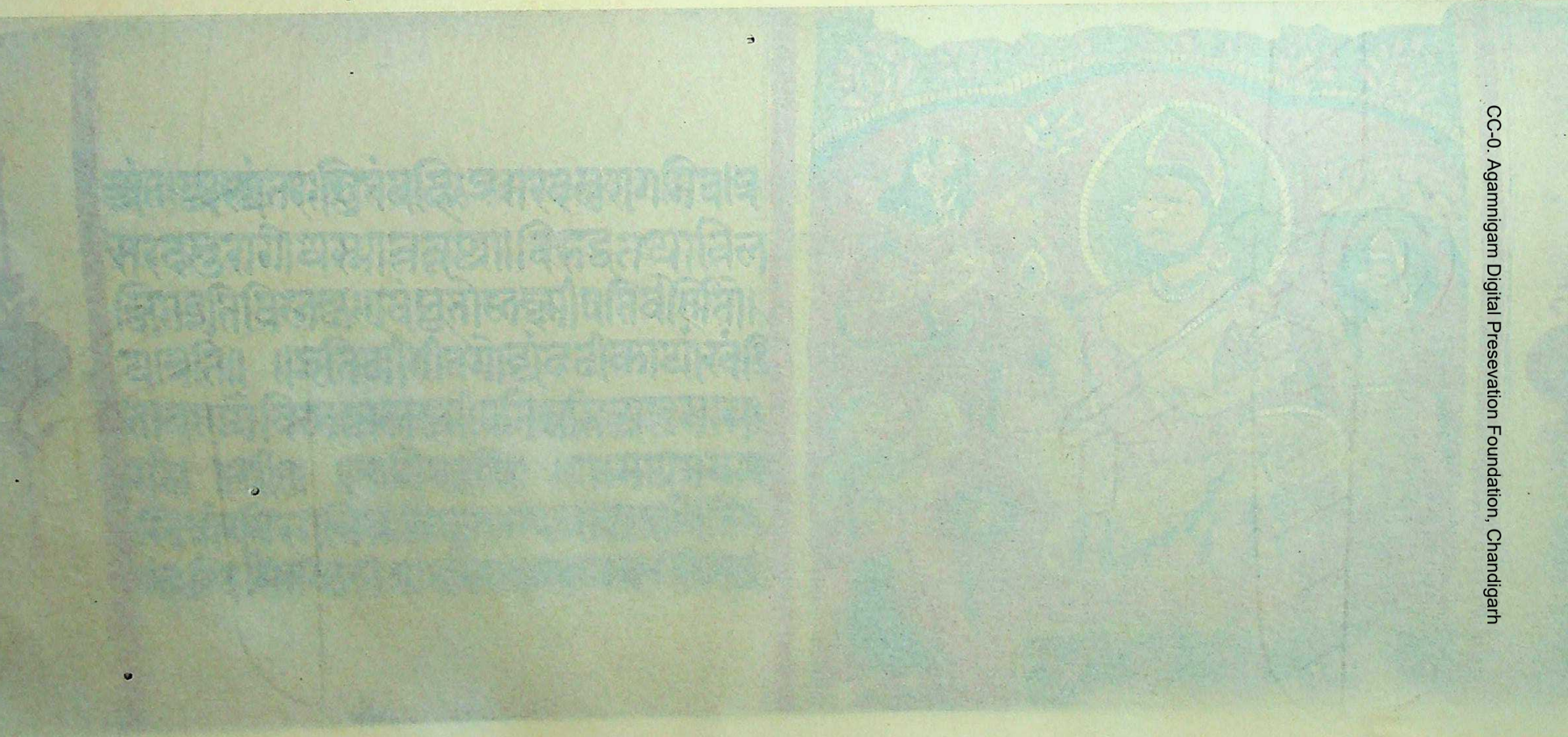
PLATE IX



The Vāmanāvatāra

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अंतः अभ्यंतरः स्थितं बहिः प्रसरदनुरागमिव प्र
सरदनुरागो यस्मात्तत्तथा ॥ विरुद्धतया विल
क्षित इति विलक्षः एवंभूतो लक्ष्मीपतिर्वर्णितो ॥
यात्रेति ॥ ॥ इति श्रीगीतगोविंदटीकायां खंडि
तावर्णने विलक्षलक्ष्मीपतिर्नाम अष्टमः स
र्गः ॥ ॥ श्रीः ॥ ॥ तामित्यादि ॥ ॥ तामथ मन्मथ
खिन्नां रतिरसभिन्नां विषादसंपन्नां अनुचिंतित
रंहरिचरितां कलहांतरितामुखाय सखी ॥ १ ॥ अ

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these lines, forming the setting, add to the artistic beauty of the brick-red back-ground. At times, two separate horizons are shown in one and the same miniature, with a view to convey different planes of surface so as to facilitate their viewing from various angles. (Vide the Nṛsiṁha and the Vāmana miniatures).

Canopy.

38. The ornate canopy or *chhatra* so common a feature in the Gujarātī paintings of the Kalpasūtra and the Bālagopāla stuti, is seen over the head of Paraśurāma, alone.

Background and colour-scheme.

39. Illustrations of Śāradā and six out of the ten avatāras illustrating the *daśāvatāra stotra* (the hymn of the ten incarnations) given in the first canto of the Gītagovinda, occupy square spaces to the right side of the folio. The pictures thus form square panels of the height of the page (4·5″ inches) occupying the space left out for them in advance by the scribe, wherein the subjects are suggested by brief legends. They are all done on a brick-red ground, enclosed in a square frame. The other colours used are green, blue, yellow, pink, pure white and pearly white, the latter being employed to depict jewelled ornaments or floral decorations. Gold is used in these paper-miniatures in place of yellow, which was generally in use on a palm-leaf surface, as gold could not adhere on palm. Flowers fill in the empty space in the composition of the miniature-panel.

Size of prominent figures in portraiture.

40. It is a canon laid down in Sanskrit texts on painting that while portraying figures of persons in different walks of life, the artist should take care to give a prominent place to respectable persons like kings, monks, saints, gods etc. and a comparatively subordinate position to others by painting them smaller in size and general makeup. This canon has been strictly observed by the Gujarātī painter, as is seen from the figure of Bali in Vāmanāvatāra.

Physical peculiarities.

41. These miniatures exhibit all the marked peculiarities in the delineation of the human form, the most conspicuous being those of—

Three-quarter profile.

(*i*) the three-quarter profile position in which the further eye protrudes, somewhat unnaturally and which is shown by pinching of the cheek, as a debased form of the ancient classical tradition ; and

(*ii*) the long pointed nose projects beyond the outline of the cheek.

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Of these peculiarities the bulging eye and projecting pointed nose are met with in the later Ajantā, and the Elūrā frescoes of Kailāsanātha temple, where the figure of "Lakṣmī riding on Garuḍa" bears a striking resemblance, to the Gujarātī style.

Pointed nose.

(*iii*) The expansion of the chest, however, is so much exaggerated that it is often difficult to distinguish a man from a woman. The broad-chested figures of Varāha, Vāmana and Paraśurāma being too much of a womanlike posture are the instances in point. The lion-waist affords a greater contrast to the exaggerated chest.

Expansion of the chest.

42. The facial expression in the Gujarāti miniature is generally the same, and the various figures are indistinguishable from one another on the score of features. However, the artistic and vigorous movements of the hands, fingers and legs make them most expressive. The conventional treatment of the eyes excludes the exhibition of the subtlest and deepest feelings and emotions of the human action. Series of male and female characters in constantly repeated and styreotyped compositions, (of course indicating a long precedent tradition) fail to arrest our attention.

Facial expression.

43. Divinities are shown with four hands, which are symbolical of the greater powers of the gods than those of men. Accordingly Śāradā, Varāha, Nṛsiṁha and Paraśurāma are painted with four hands, the only exception being that of Vāmana who has not only two hands, but has also a beard, and a moustache; and has put on black pointed shoes.

Hands.

44. The nimbus or the halo round the heads of almost all the personages in these miniatures is shown in different colours; but it is not limited to the divinities and important persons alone. From this we surmise that the conventional halo in the miniatures, gives us no clue as to the exact significance of this ornamental motif. The colour of these round and oval shaped *prabhāmaṇḍala* or nimbus is shown either in blue or green colour, or is simply outlined by white lines on the red background.

Halo or *prabhāmaṇḍala.*

45. Generally, divinities are painted with *mukuṭas*, while ordinary menfolk and female-folk are represented bare-headed. In the Gītagovinda miniatures angular *mukuṭas*—or jewelled head-dresses are employed for all men, women having been shown without it, the only exception being that of Śāradā (first folio). But they wear *mukuṭa*

Mukuṭa.

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PLATE X

The Paraśurāmāvatāra

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Of these peculiarities the bulging eye and projecting pointed nose are met with in the later Ajantā, and the Elūrā frescoes of Kailāsanātha temple, where the figure of "Lakṣmī riding a [illegible]" bears a striking resemblance, to the Gujarātī style.

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and the usual ornaments of the ears, the neck and the arms, besides the anklets.

Large earrings and floral decorations.

46. The large circular earrings shown prominently along with garlands were already a common feature of the toilet of the mediæval Gujarāti men and women. Flowers are found to be in the hair both of males and females as decoration. These are in evidence in the Gītagovinda miniatures also. The large earrings and the floral decorations of the dancing women in the Bāgh Cave fresco are noteworthy, for these are precisely the features of the Gujarātīs, which excited ridicule from the Indians in other parts of the country. The large earrings and the braid of hair worn by Gujarātīs appear to have amused outsiders.[1]

Braid of hair or *Veṇi*.

47. Ladies are decked with elaborate necklaces and have a *Veṇī*, the knitted braid of hair falling below the knees. The woven plaits of women's long hair falling into snaky braids,—sometimes hanging in a single braid ending in a tassel—are to be noted with the knots of men's hair gathered and tied up behind. Such knots of long hair at the back are painted in the figures of Varāha, Vāmana and Paraśurama.

"The most striking thing about the costume of the (Gujarāti) people" observes N. C. Mehta in his "Further Essay on Vasant Vilāsa," (pp. 28-29) "is not the dress of the woman, but the vanity of the man ; for besides *dhotis* and *dupattās* and elaborate necklaces, star-shaped earrings, tight anklets not to speak of bracelets and the *kataka* (*kadu*) just over the elbow—he with his moustache and beard, and his body bare above the waist, is seen carefully gathering his hair in a knot behind, decked with lotusbuds and flowers!"

Beard.

48. The strange thing about the Gujarātī miniatures upto the end of the 16th century is the painting of man with short beard. The Hindus appear to have the same liking for the short beard as the Mussalmans, which seems to be a remnant of an old Indo-Iranian custom. Its presence is accountable in another way also, because beard is possibly taken to be a symbol of manhood. (Compare Indra in the Kalpa-Sūtra miniature, Plate XI(i)). Wonderfully enough, however, in the Vāmanāvatāra miniature when God is said to have manifested himself as a *baṭuka* or a boy, the artist has given a beard to Vāmana, whereas Paraśurāma and King Hiraṇya-Kaśipu on the lap of Nṛsiṁha are shown with clean chins! The other figures with a beard are the two

1. *Cf.*, pp. 16 and 38 of "*Pāda-Tāḍitakam*" by Syāmila in "*Caturbhāṇī*" quoted by N. C. Mehta in "Gujarāti Painting in the 15th century —A Further Essay on Vasant Vilāsa," pp. 29, f.n.

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men sitting at the feet of Varāha, and King Bali standing with suppliant hands before Vāmana.

Drapery for men and women.

49. The men wear *dhoti* or the waist-cloth long or short, with another scarf or *uttarīya* falling across the shoulders. The people—men and women—appear to be fond of stripped, spotted or flowered dresses. Women wear blue, red or green close-fitting bodices (*cholis*) coming right down to the waist and covering the arm sometimes upto the elbow or even the entire arm. Women dressed in floating scarf and waist-cloth are painted with unusual taste and vigour. The flying drapery of women adds a special charm to the portraiture.

The *pyjāmā* and the woman's veil (as visible during the Mūghal period) do not appear in these miniatures of the Gujarātī School. It is evident that the costume of 15th Century Gujarāt must be treated as being akin to that of Ajantā, not of Delhi and Agra. The subsequent change speaks clearly of a far deeper penetration of Mūghal influence as is visible in Gujarātī and Rājput paintings of the 17th century.

Two peculiarities of the Gītagovinda miniatures.

50. Over and above sharing all the common points of the Gujrātī painting, these miniatures show two features which are hitherto not noticed in any other illustrated Ms. of the Gujarātī school, and hence they are worthy of note.

Absence of *Tilaka* mark.

51. The U-shaped Vaiṣṇava mark or the *tilaka* is conspicuous by its absence in this Ms., the subject-matter of which is positively Vaiṣṇava. This in a way suggests that its presence in Jaina religious Mss. was merely formal and traditional, and it conveyed nothing.[1] [Vide Plate XI(i), and (ii)]. The *tilaka* was thus simply a conventional mark on the forehead of males, shown by Gujarātī painters without any relation to the theme or religious creed.

Black pointed shoes worn both by males and females.

52. The other extraordinarily remarkable point is the delineation of pointed shoes of indigenous Gujarāti shape : which are ordinarily of black colour and are worn both by males and females. It need not be remarked that the shape of the shoes is rustic and pre-Mūghal ; and are clearly noticeable in four out of the seven miniatures ; they having got merged in the gold colour of the Śāradā, the Paraśurāma and the Nṛsiṁha miniatures.

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1. *Vide* my paper on "Two illustrated Mss. of *Rati Rahasya* of the Gujarāt School of Painting"—*Bombay University Journal* Vol. V, Part VI, (May 1937), p. 139.

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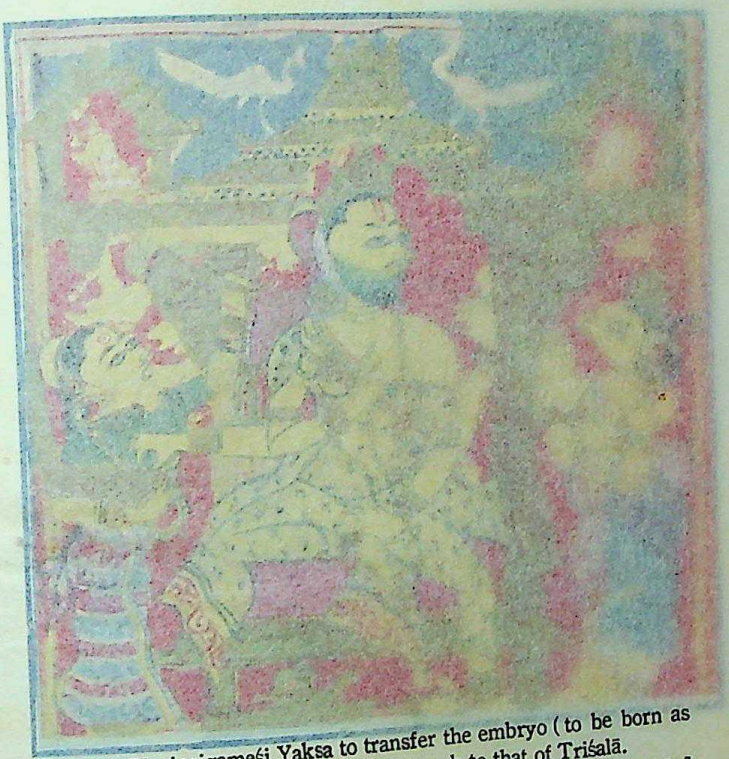
PLATE XI (i)



Indra asking Hariṇaigameśi Yakṣa to transfer the embryo (to be born as Lord Mahāvīra) from Devānandā's womb to that of Triśalā.
[*—Vide para 36 of the article*]

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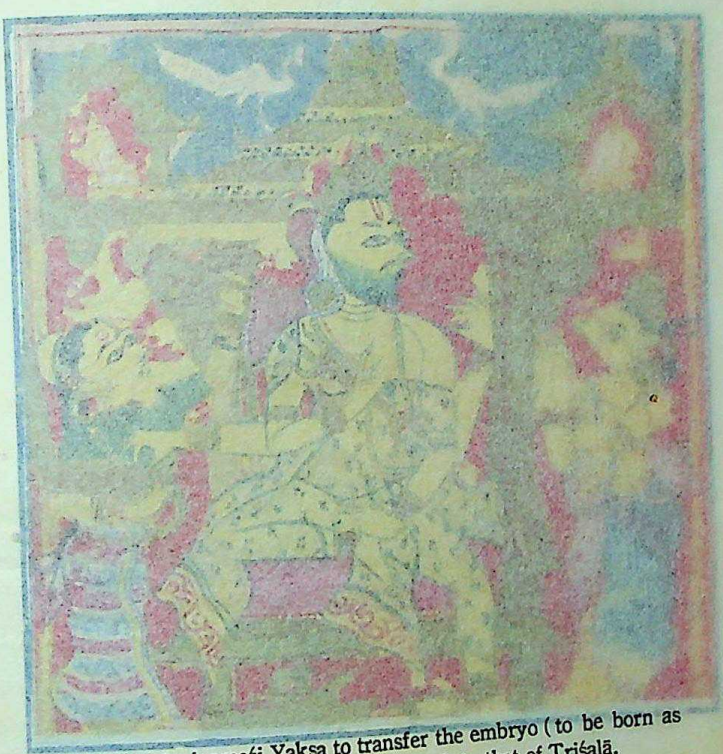

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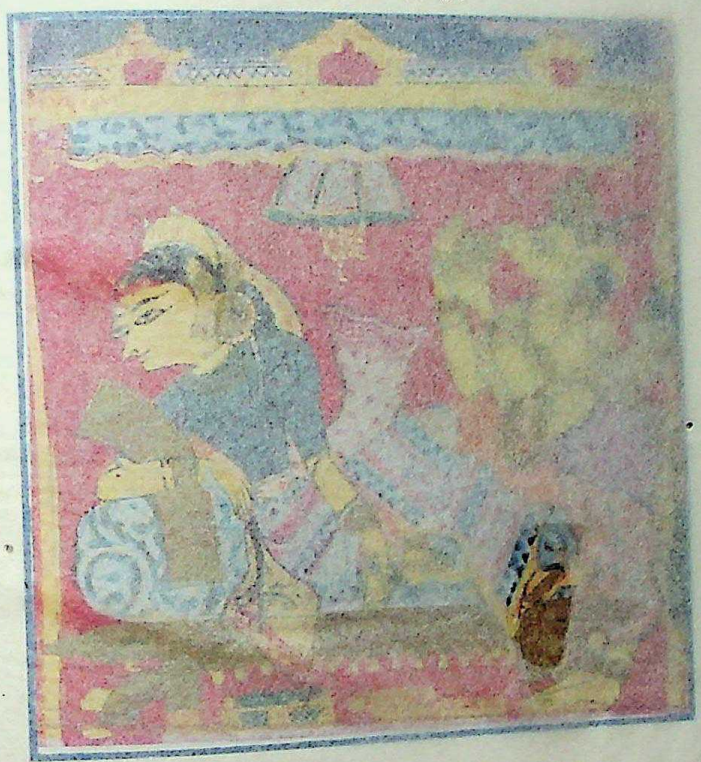
PLATE XI (ii)



Hariṇaigameśi Yakṣa with the embryo, at Triśalā's palace-chamber.

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Estimate of the Gujarātī style

53. Even though it has been remarked that the art of miniature-painting of the 14th and the 15th century Mss. is primarily of archæological and historical rather than of æsthetic interest, I would like to point out that the old tradition of Ajantā and Elūrā fresco-paintings has been in a way directly handed down to miniatures transferred on paper, as is evidenced by certain elegant figures both of men and women in this Ms. However, in estimating the Gujarātī art of this period it must not be forgotten that we are dealing with an extra-ordinarily interesting phase of popular bourgeois art. It should not, therefore, be judged from the high standard of the classical frescoes; judged as such, the Gujarātī miniatures of the Gītagovinda Ms. afford very interesting material on the art of Indian painting of this period.

Acknowledgment of substantial help of the Bombay University.

54. Publication of this article in the form it is presented to the scholars, is made possible solely through the substantial help the authorities of the Bombay University have given towards its publication by arranging for the reproduction in colours of the various miniatures illustrating this contribution.

M. R. MAJMUDAR

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REVIEWS

The Jasmine Garland (*Kundamālā*) : translated into English by Prin. Dr. A. C. WOOLNER, published by the Oxford University Press for The University of the Punjab. 6s. net.

Kundamālā of Diṅnāga (otherwise called Dhīranāga) was first brought to light in 1923 when it appeared as the second number of the series, Dakṣiṇā-Bhāratī-Grantha-Mālā. It is a play based upon that unique episode in the life of King Rāma viz. his ruthless banishment of his consort Sītā, much against his conviction and will, with the intent of satisfying his subjects who censoriously questioned her chastity after her enforced sojourn in Laṅkā. Of the numerous episodes in Rāma's life, this one has had special fascination for Playwrights owing to its abundant dramatic possibilities, what with its conflicting interests, its irony, and above all its opportunities for vindicating the honour of that idol of Indian chastity, Sītā.

The present play which begins with the banishment of Sītā and ends with her reunion with Rāma makes full capital out of Rāma's guilty conscience, his ignorance of the safety of Sītā and the birth of the twins, and the composition of the Ādi-Kāvya. It derives its name from the jasmine garlands which Sītā offered in worship to the Ganges everyday and one of which seen by Rāma made him doubt whether Sītā was not living after all. The incident of the garland though responsible for the naming of the play is hardly so important in the action thereof.

The translation is precise[1] and yet elegant. While strictly con-

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1. The translation, generally faultless as it is, may be, with advantage, modified in the following places :—

Act I, page 4 : 'Crumbling bank' for प्रपात (waterfall).

Act II, page 14 : 'Has he not to take the hand of a companion in the great Horse Sacrifice' for ननु तत्राश्वस्य सहधर्मचारिण्या पाणिग्रहो निर्वर्तयितव्यः (evident reference to the mimic union of यजमानपत्नी with the sacrificial horse).

Act. II, p. 15 : "Perhaps my birth will yield the fruit" etc., for अवि कुसलवाणं तादस्स दंसणेण जम्मं अमोहं भवेदित्ति (The birth of कुशलव is referred to, with greater propriety.)

Act IV, page 24, St. 6 'buds' for पल्लव (Sprouts). Page 27 'Subjects' for परिजन (dependents).

Act V, page 31 : 'black and sticky as a storm-cloud' for नवमेघश्यामल

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cf. VIII. 1·18*d* (*ā jātā sukrato pṛṇa*). The simile in *d* requires explanation ; *tā* is the Upameya ; *apsu* (*vartamānā*) *yūthā* is the Upamāna and *ūtī samījamānaḥ* is the common term, to which, however, *pṛṇati* does not belong. Perhaps, the simile may be taken as a compound one with *durgeṣu* supplied to correspond to *apsu*. Two separate similes seem to have been welded into one in our passage ; in the first, Indra is compared with a cow-boy and men with herds of cattle ; cf. V. 31·1*cd* ; VI. 19·3*cd* ; and also VI. 49·12*b*. In the second, dangers are compared with waters and Indra's protection with a boat ; cf. I. 97·8 ; V. 4·9 ; VIII. 83·3 ; 96·11 ; IX. 70·10 etc. *c* is repeated at 37·5*d* below. (6) I construe *bcd* together. *ūtī-anūtī* : This shows how it is Indra's nature and hobby to kill the Vṛtras and Dasyūs ; he will kill them even when he has not to protect any particular worshipper thereby. *hiriśipraḥ* : i.e., owing to the Soma which he has recently drunk and which is still sticking to parts of his mouth ; he is called *hariśipra* and *hariśmaśāru* at X. 96·4 ; 12, and X. 96·8 respectively, for the same reason. Agni, on the other hand, is called *hiriśipra* and *hiriśmaśru* at II. 2·5 ; V. 7·7 ; X. 46·5, owing to his yellow flames.

[*To be continued*]

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RARE SCULPTURES FROM KOṬYARKA AND AN ILLUSTRATED MS. OF GĪTAGOVINDA

By

PROFESSOR M. R. MAJMUDAR, M.A., LL.B.,
Baroda College, Baroda

I

RARE SCULPTURES FROM KOṬYARKA (NORTH GUJARĀT)

(i)

FOR some centuries before and after the beginning of the Christian era, the dominant mode of creative thought in India was theological; and we must realise that all the arts were governed by a great enthusiasm like that of the Cathedral-builders of mediæval Europe, in all the enduring aspects and in their greatest splendour in the service of the churches, upon which endowment and adornment was lavished with enormous wealth. Long after the first creative impulses had been crystallised in the mediæval period, there can still be traced successive developments of thought and feeling, modifications and elaborations of the older iconography with the result that India, despite the destruction wrought by Mahomedan iconoclasts, is even to-day covered with magnificent temples and a wealth of sculptures, in which the spiritual and material history of two thousand years is visibly recorded.

For a comprehensive knowledge, not only of Indian Art, but the art of any country, in order to appreciate it fully, one must have a background knowledge regarding its evolution. The influences which govern such evolution are dependent upon religion, climatic conditions and geographic circumstances, and any dissertation on a piece of art is incomplete without it. Hence one must prefer to trace the importance of a piece of work, more through its æsthetic quality rather than by its religious significance. Works of art can be discussed and appreciated with greater advantage by purely æsthetic considerations; because it is only thereby that we get an insight into the artist's instinctive feeling for beauty of composition and line; and with regard to sculpture one can appreciate something relating to significant form also. The literary matter dealing with the subject of the Indian Art from its mystical, legendary, iconographic and historic aspects should, therefore, be considered secondary.

Restricting ourselves to Indian Æsthetics, there have been many schools of thought—the *Alankāra* School, the *Guṇa*, the *Rīti*, the *Vakrokti*, the *Rasa*, the *Dhvani*, the *Auchitya*, etc. The most approved æsthetic doctrine, however, is that of *Rasa*; and it has held the field of Indian Æsthetics since thousands of years. In the mood of æsthetic pleasure *Sattvaguṇa* is predominant, whilst desire, selfishness, and worldliness are in a state of suppression, if not of negation. It is enjoined

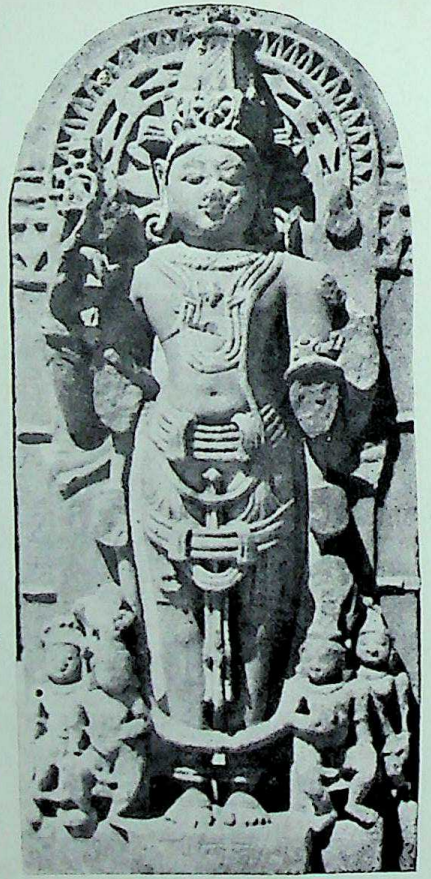

FIG. 1
Hṛṣīkeśa—One of the
24 forms of Viṣṇu

FIG. 2
The huge metal image either of Dhyānī
Buddha or of a Jaina Tīrthankara

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in Śāstric texts that the icons representing religious symbolism should be given a pleasing form and serene expression so as to engender love and reverence in the heart of the worshipper. Hence it is found that in the elegence of the image there is grace, above the grace is the modelling : and all approach very much something which one may call sweet,—very vigorously sweet. The tenderness of the expression is accordingly found to be in general harmony with the execution of the sculpture.

A study of the artistic anatomy of the sculpture suggests two equally important branches of study—the Æsthetics of Hindu Iconography and the Philosophy of Hindu Iconography—tracing the iconographic instinct of the Hindus through vision (*Dhyāna*) to expression (*rūpa*) and through realisation (*sādhanā*) to predication (*pravartana*). It is the function of the art to give men images and symbols of harmony and strength—to lead men out of the ugly and the commonplace into a future realm of heroic beauty. Its function is not only to please and entertain but also to mould mankind in a new image. In India, the methods of religion and art are as one ; for their object is the same—the unveiling of the Infinite.

While Indian works evoke æsthetic experiences when beheld by alien eyes, Indian and European art are not identical in kind ; because the intention is different. In its main development of sculpture and architecture—Indian art was not produced with a view to æsthetic experience, nor was it even regarded as "art." Images in particular were not regarded as works of art, but as means of edification. An image is a piece of apparatus employed in personal devotion, the object of which is an identification in consciousness of worshipper and deity. Hence critically examined, Indian art reveals no knowledge of anatomy, but rather a deep understanding of life, of emotion and of the language of gestures. Nor are its themes confined to those set forth in terms of human life ; side by side with these are dogmatic and mythological forms unparallelled in nature.

To evaluate a piece of art one should, therefore, put three questions : viz., what is its beauty ? what is in it that gives pleasure ? and what is therein that is of ultimate value ?—and he will find a common answer for them all that it is nothing but maximum vitality combined with perfect harmony, which expresses itself, either in a two or three dimensional representation. This harmony or balance is the pivot of Art : A piece of art is of real value when the artist adds something of his own to the objects of nature. Nature is taken by the artist as the raw material only, and is arranged and rearranged into a new composition, balancing the component parts, with a view to expressing the beauty of harmony.

(ii)

The ruined shrine of Koṭyarka stands on the top of a hillock at the village Khaḍāt-mahuḍi in Vijāpur Tālukā to the north-east of Gujarāt, in Baroda State territories. It is situated on the right bank of the Sābarmati or the ancient Śvabhrā of the Purānas, and commands the view of the *Sangama* with the river Hāthmati from the high mound.

The remains of the temple betray sculptures and architecture of different periods of history. As the name suggests, originally it may have

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been a Sun-temple, owing perhaps to the existence of the Kunda in the vicinity known as Sūryakunda. Sun-worship, we know, was eventually overshadowed by that of Viṣṇu, it being one of the twelve names of Āditya (*Ādityānām aham Viṣṇuḥ*)—that all-pervading God who traverses the three worlds. Beautiful marble images of Viṣṇu, of the mediæval period of Hindu sculpture found strewn over the ruins, go to establish further the prevalence of Viṣṇu-worship in this locality* (Plate I).

The surrounding territory is studded with hills and is full of forests, fertile valleys watered by great rivers, lakes and old monuments in the form of beautiful temples, idols of exquisite beauty and anatomical perfection, sanctuaries of departed heroes and beautiful step-wells. The fertile valley formed by the confluence of Sābarmati with Hāthmati is, thus very rich in archæological remains, ranging from the third century onwards.

The locality seems to have been in a flourishing condition possessing large cities in the past, as it is testified by the ruins of beautiful temples, reservoirs and large number of steps-wells spread all over the territory. In the 6th century Grahāditya, son of Śīlāditya of the Maitraka clan (from *Mitra*—Sun) acquired this territory from the Bhils after the sack of Valabhipur by Arab invaders, who, it is said, killed Śīlāditya and destroyed the city.

Pre-historic stone-implements belonging to the neolithic age were secured long ago (in 1894) in the vicinity of Koṭyarka temple from the banks of the Sābarmati. Kśatrapa coins of Rudradāman dated 150 A.D. were unearthed from the vicinity of this site. Sassanian or Gadhaiyā coins bearing the figure of a sacrificial horse, and belonging to the Gupta period are also found from this site. The big-size bricks unearthed from the ruins bear a crude finger-mark, as was the practice during the Gupta period. Only recently huge bronze images either of the Buddhistic or of the Jaina cult, not yet conclusively identified, were found while digging the foundation of a house. The back-side *prabhāvali* of one of these images has, it is alleged, an inscription on the back in minute late Brāhmi script, placing the image in the early 7th century on stylistic grounds (Plate II).

The sculptures under description are very beautiful and chiselled with great anatomical perfection. They are very useful in that they throw light on the ancient civilization and culture of the country, that produced them. Though it appears, the primary motive in these sculptures as in the frescoes at Ajanta was devotional, the actual creations were in no small measure influenced by entirely non-religious influences.

The two rare sculptures in round, carved from black granite available in the vicinity, deserve a close study. The stone used is local grey granite called Dantrāl stone, which yields to elaborate carving and is capable of good polish, though difficult to work upon. They are remarkable for their homely theme as well as their execution, where naturalism and

Vide my paper on "Studies in Varieties of Viṣṇu Images from Gujarāt" in the Dr. Bhagvānlāl Indraji Commemoration Volume. Guj. Research Soc. J. (Sept. 1939).

FIG. 3
Mother and child, with a peacock by their side

FIG. 4
A mother with a child (Standing)

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rhythm are one at a time when the classical Indian art is said to have come into existence, i.e., from the 2nd century B.C. to the 8th century A.D.

The sculptures belong to an age when the artist had a genuine love for the sportive and lovely babies, and had a motherly and devotional conception of the female form as distinguished from the otherwise sensuous suggestion from the limbs of a woman : when the mother was considered to be the earthly human form of a goddess, and when birds and animals used to be the kith and kin of the Indian household.

When we consider how the artist might have worked upon the stone with no " model " before him, excepting the mental image gradually transferred to stone with an unfailing hand, we have nothing but praise for the control of the sculpture in handling the chisel. The free movement and the natural pose of the female body must have been possible in a society when the eyes were free from sensuous appeal.

The innocent and child-like simplicity on the face and the natural delineation of the limbs of the girl bespeak highly of the sculptor's art (Plate III). It may be, the mother is coming out on the verandah from her household routine with some newly prepared delicacy for the babe. The plaits of the *sāri* are remarkable and the style in which the skirts are made up is reminiscent of similar handling in sculptures of this early period.

The pendant ear-ornament is visible in only the left ear, the other having been broken. She has only one single necklace with a pendant like the *pagalā* (a foot-print shape) variety, the *mangala-sūtra* as it is properly called. The spareness of ornaments and the delineation of the absolutely requisite ornaments—like the armlet, the bracelet, the anklet and the girdle gives an artistic and ornamental touch to the homely incident, without making it cumbersome. For, in ordinary home-life ladies do not indulge in an overwhelming use of ornaments, except on festive occasions.

The technique of the sculpture is simple yet decisive and exquisite, of a period when the artistic utterance was in its fullness. The small boy is enjoying a ride on the shoulders of his sister ; and the mother is offering some eatable to the chubby boy. The homely peacock, being always on the doorways, hides himself behind the skirts of the *sāri* of the mother, with its eyes fixed towards the things offered to the baby. All the three figures have smiling faces, but the child looks rather quaint.

This sculpture portrays the simple and homely yet the most universal sentiment of motherly love. The emphasis on the female character of the figure is not overstressed, while a frontality is abandoned and one leg of the figure is set behind the other. The figure rests the weight of her body on her right leg and keeps it balanced by a slight bent to the left. A position in three-quarter profile set at an angle against the ground is given preference to front or profile views.

The expression on the baby's face turned upwards at the touch of the loving mother and that of the mother approaching the child with a view

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to feed it with some eatable, while it catches the last finger of the mother's palm are remarkably natural, vivid and pleasing. The sister stops her play in order to amuse the baby by allowing it to ride on her shoulders.

Considering the environments of the Viṣṇu temple, can we identify the sculpture possibly with some domestic scene from the life of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopis?

The likeness of the mother in Plate III is partly reminiscent of Pārvatī in the betrothal scene of Śiva and Pārvatī in the Elephantā Caves (circa 8th century) both as regards the pleasing expression on the face and the working up of the locks of hair in a coronet.

The sculpture of Śiva-Pārvatī (circa 6th century A.D.) in the Archæological Museum at Himatnagar (Iḍar State) situated just on the banks of Hāthmati, opposite to the site of the Koṭyarka shrine, bears one outstanding point of resemblance with the figure in Plate II, viz., the delineation of the homely peacock. Both Śiva and Pārvatī are in the standing pose and Pārvatī is carrying the infant Gaṇeśa in two of her four arms. Both are wearing *uttarīya*: the peacock on the side of Pārvatī, partly in view, seems very much interested in the child. The general pose of the peacock compares admirably well with the one in the sculpture just referred to. Pārvatī has *mekhalā*. She is wearing garment reaching up to the anklets. The hair are dressed and held in position by coronets. She also wears circular *kuṇḍalas*, necklace, armlet, wristlets and armlets, which are very delicate in appearance.

The full slenderness of the female figure persists in these sculptures, but the sensuousness is entirely absent, and the arms and legs have all the pliability which the artist could have endowed them with. The form of female figure appears to be superhuman, with its slim waist and the shoulders, and the chest, also getting narrow or medium-size, and the breasts small. The figure of woman, with ample hips and full breasts retains, whatever may be her name the stamp of motherhood.

The figure of the standing woman with a child (Plate IV) is made to show a movement that passes vertically and arch-like from head to toe, with the highest curvature in the middle of the body. The head and feet lie in the same vertical plane. The long oval of the face remains unaltered in cast and expression. The eyes look with defiant frankness or modesty at the world. The breadth of shoulders and the standing posture in the figures which are cast in the round is given a lyrical *tri-bhaṅga* pose, which has freed it from all crude gravity. The expression on the face is very jovial and the balance of the body is perfect and the flow of lines symmetrical. The delicacy of the pose, the roundness of the limbs and the plastic moulding of the belly are very artistically done. The wearing of the apparel, the folds and ends are nicely shown. The body is inclined to the right as if to counterbalance the weight of the child on the left side of the hip, and the legs from thighs downwards, bend in sickle shape. The body rests submissively and in a curve almost concave on firm hips.

The slender and rounded limbs of the woman are bent in sharp angles and seem to split the tender composition into many fragments. Their

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FIG. 5

A mother with a child on the lap, popularly known as Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa

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joints act at the same time as so many centres where nervous energy is bundled up and from where it radiates to its next station. This is undergone with much grace of appearance. The sharp precise angles of heel, knee, hip, elbows and wrists are but the centres of utmost suppleness and flowing curve that twists the body in a *tri-bhaṅga* that has as much shyness as it is aggressively alive.

An almost identical sculpture of a woman with a child in the Archæological Museum at Himatnagar is available in a portion. The woman is wearing large circular kuṇḍalas one of which the child wants to catch hold of, as in the sculpture from Koṭyarka. She has a necklace, a fine head-dress, with a flower set with gems tied by strings, and has put on an upper-garment.

The various kinds of head-wear or coiffure met with here are very interesting. The most interesting part of the sculpture is thus the style of arranging hair in the form of a coronet. The crowns worn by ladies in these sculptures are as variegated and elaborate as those of the males. The hair are made up in a peculiar style, and as if tied by a small coronet of complicated and fantastic design. The mother is seen with a wealth of locks of which the softness is at one with the warmth of her mood. Plate V—a seated mother with a baby lying on the lap—popularly worshipped as Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa—is a stray sculpture lying in the adjoining forest, some miles away from the site of the Koṭyarka temple.

The drapery is indicated by flowing, gliding, melodious curves, and the volume of drapery is allowed to keep clung to the body. In the post-Gupta or Maurya period, the garment was made as invisible as possible and indicated by a few *rekhās* only in the modelled surface of the body, or it hang like an apron in front of it, where it was meant to suggest the loose ends of drapery. In these sculptures the drapery is nicely shown by incised lines and the scarf, tied across the hips with a loop-like arrangement in the front.

The seated image of Viṣṇu (Plate VI) with 14 hands riding on Garuḍa in human-form is wrought in white marble which is locally available from the Ārāsura Hills on Mt. Ābu, and lends itself to being worked to the utmost possibilities of over-wrought gestures and poses. It is now preserved in a nitche on the outer wall of the newly built temple at Koṭyarka, possibly a later substitute for the original Sun-image including the other equally interesting image of 20-armed Viṣṇu and identified as Viśvarūpa, according to the text of the *Rūpamaṇḍana*.

The sculpture belongs to the Mediæval period of Indian Art, and can be assigned to the 10th Century A.D. It belongs to the group of abnormal or special forms of Viṣṇu as described in the Śilpa works of Maṇḍana, and so far known to be peculiar to Western Indian Hindu Iconography alone.*

*For a fuller iconographic treatment of the image, vide my paper on "*Studies in Varieties of Viṣṇu-Images from Gujarāt*"—"Gujarēt Research Society Journal." Dr. Bhagavānlāl Indraji Commemoration Volume, October 1939, and my other paper on "*Gujarāti or the Western School of Mediæval Indian Sculpture*" in the "Indian Historical Quarterly" for September 1938.

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Representations of Hindu Gods begin to appear on dated Indian coins, on which they are depicted about 75 A.D. in normal human form with one head and two arms. In the coins of Kaniṣka and his successor by about 100 A.D. four-armed figure became common, besides two-armed ones. The first stage of the innovation in representing the gods was thus the addition of two extra arms. This was originally an expedient for displaying the symbols of identification, when the natural hands were otherwise engaged. When gesture or action had to be represented it was always done by the natural hands (cf : the *dhyāna-mudrā* in Plate IV), while the additional arms rising from the back of the shoulders held up the distinctive symbols of the god, generally in quite an obtrusive manner.

Thus the way of making the human figure appear superhuman consisted in a multiple of heads or limbs. These were not a number of different heads or limbs, but they represented stages of one movement, and have to be understood dynamically as indicative of the potency of the superhuman being in the simultaneousness of their pressure. Multiplicity of parts of the body for ever remained an outstanding feature of Indian divinities.

When the possession of a plurality of arms had established itself as an exclusively super-human attribute and when the four-armed type had once been in vogue as characteristic of the gods, the number of arms gradually increased in Hindu Iconography from four to six, eight, ten, twelve, sixteen and even twenty ! Multiplicity of limbs combined with a transformed body amounted to an incorporation of further, i.e., transcendental possibilities. Thus eight-armed figures occur as early as 600 A.D., and in the rock-cut Kailāsa Śiva temple at Ellorā excavated in the 8th century onwards.

Viṣṇu occasionally has eight arms, and some of his *avatāras* more than four : thus Trivikrama, appears with six, and Narasiṃha with eight. Curiously enough this Narasiṃha is given sixteen hands in the Hindu relief at the Jaina temple of Vimalaśāha at Mt. Ābu built in 1031 A.D. But the artist has been hard put to it in assigning the distinct poses and symbols to the sixteen hands, as he is handicapped in the presentation of the principal figure due to the multiplicity of hands.

However, the Viṣṇu image which is intermediary between Ananta (12-armed) on one hand and Trailokyamohana (16-armed) on the other, is verily an artistic execution.

The ponderosity about the Viṣṇu image with 14 hands which measures 2 feet 5 inches in height and about 2 feet in breadth is relieved by a homely glow of life conveyed by a comfortable leaning towards naturalness.

The weightiness of the figure is made conspicuous by heavy and very high and cylindrical crowns which further enhance the verticalism of the figure. While by their height, they press down upon their actual weight, so that they appear burdened with the dignity they have to support. By the counter movement of the ascending growth of the figure, and of the

FIG. 6—Viṣṇu with 14 hands

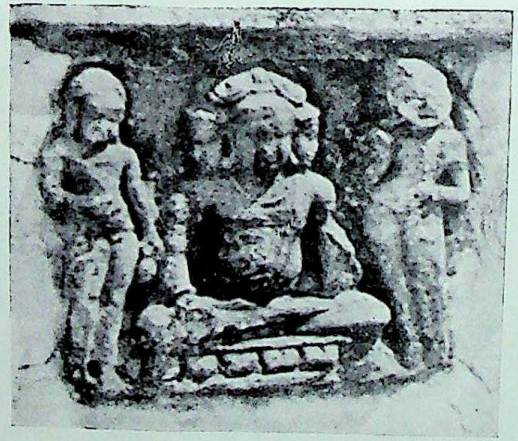

FIG. 7—A small sculpture in the old wall of the Koṭyarka temple

FIG. 8—Image of Ajitanātha, 7 feet high

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descending crush of the crown, tense and unrelieved energies accumulate within the body.

Viṣṇu whose origin is solar has the Garuḍa-bird capable of the highest flights in the sky as his conveyance. This Garuḍa delineated in small human form, sinks into nothingness before the life-size bulky body of the abnormal form of Viṣṇu. But this disproportion in itself represents a kind of equilibrium which is not stabilised, but which can be called grotesque.

The Viṣṇu image illustrated here is beautifully yet delicately ornamented, and the expression of the face is serene and peaceful. The treatment of the form of the body, the apparel, the various objects—symbols and ornaments—though regulated by Śāstric prescriptions, the hand of the artist is still visible. The sublimity of the sculpture and its exquisite workmanship compel one's admiration. The figure has over and above having multiplicity of hands four faces—two on either side, the fourth to be imagined behind the front one.

The artistic peculiarities of Gujarāti sculptures bear a close resemblance to the specimens of Bengāli and Orissian sculpture of the mediæval period. The period of mediæval Indian sculpture ranges from the 9th to the 13th century, and during this period each art-province in India gave fullest expression and reached its zenith at the particular moment which was most congenial to its inherent trends. The delicate ornamentation, artistic expression, boldness of outline, definiteness of detail and the pleasing effect produced on the mind of every onlooker make the images of this period the product of the best days of Hindu art.

Plate VII illustrates a small sculpture in the old wall of the Koṭyarka temple. Plate VIII is an interesting marble image of Ajitanātha Tīrthaṁkara, about 7 feet high in standing posture, known as *kāyotsarga* pose. The other interesting point about this sculpture is a short inscription at its bottom श्रीमहिकठिर्नगरे श्रीसुणा ऊषड अजितबिंब कारितं मोहु देवकेन which records the old name of the village Mahudi, where Koṭyarka temple is situated. It is mentioned as महिकठिर्नगरे perhaps owing to abundance of Mahua trees in its vicinity. It also adds weight to the identification of the big metal image as being probably Jaina from its relation to Jainism.

Whatever the period of these sculptures from Koṭyarka, they are undoubtedly beautiful and artistic, of which any part of India could naturally be proud.

I am indebted to the Bombay University which has substantially helped to facilitate my studies in the indigenous arts and crafts of Gujarāt.

II

A Newly Discovered Illuminated Gītagovinda Ms. from Gujarāt (Late 15th Century A.D.)

(i)

IN spite of the synthetic and cultural unity, every province of India has, from the remotest times, developed and possessed an art-tradition

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of her own as giving expression to the spirit of the particular race which inhabits that province. It is the synthesis of these separate and diverse art-traditions subsisting in different parts of India and each possessing a distinct individuality that constitutes the common mosaic of Indian Art, which was produced not merely to give expression to the artist's own feelings or emotions, but in response to a definite demand in the social and religious life of the people on one hand, while on the other it was a spontaneous expression of the life of the people themselves and was an inseparable part of that life. There was thus no duality between life and art.

The relation between Art and Religion is a matter of eternal interest. The whole of Indian life is so based on theocratic ideals that it is not surprising that art should also be so. India is spiritualistic, and its spirituality is the underlying cause of its art-culture. As to please the Gods the Indian people developed their Music, so to illuminate the attributes of their divinities they had recourse to Painting and Sculpture. And to enshrine their metallic and lithic images they eventually developed their Architecture. Sculpture, Architecture and Painting—all the three are thus inter-related and they grew up side by side. The architects built Stūpas, Vihāras and temples, while the sculptors found their motives in the legends of Buddha, Mahāvīra, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and the stories associated with their life and religion. Art in India has, thus, always been a hand-maid of religion.

Although nearly all Indian Art is religious it is a mistake to suppose that 'style' was dependent on creed. 'Style' is more conveniently considered as a function of time and place, varying according to the date and locality of the work. There is no such thing for example, as a Jaina style of architecture or painting. The Stūpas of the Jainas are indistinguishable in form from those of the Buddhists, and a Jaina curvilinear steeple is identical in outline with that of a Brāhmanical temple.

Pictorial art in Western India, principally of Gujarāt, is, thus, the style of a geographical area and not of a particular creed, either Jaina or Hindu, or Rajput as it is styled between 16th and 19th centuries. The technique and style of the miniature-painting in Mss. of Jaina canonical works ranging from 12th century up to the 16th, is identical with those of the Brāhmanical and secular Mss. that have come to light. The same thing holds good even in the later Hindu miniatures that come under the influence of the Mughal style.

The great cycle of classic Sanskrit literature and Śāstrīya plastic art had passed their zenith before the end of the 9th century. The vernaculars of various provinces began to develop from the secondary Prākrits about the 10th or 11th century. This development was not merely an accidental change, but a movement of constructive evolution under the great spiritual impulse of the Paurānic renaissance—the emergence of the ultimate phases of Indian religion in the cults of Śiva, Śakti and Viṣṇu, in their loving manifestations.

PLATE II—Vāmanāvatāra

PLATE III—Rādhā with her Sakhi (attendant)

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And the beginning of the 16th century was a time of great religious, social and literary upheaval for it witnessed the careers not only of Chaitanya, Vallabha, the founder of the popular cult of emotional Vaiṣṇavism—the Puṣṭimārga, and Tukārāma, the spiritual preceptor of the Great Shivāji, but also of Nānak, the founder of the virile congregation of the Sikhs.

Under the influence of the gradually developing phases of popular Vaiṣṇavism in Gujarāt, the cult of Śiva and Śakti was greatly modified, and it resulted in the Right-hand worship of the Mother Goddess with identical Smārta or Vaiṣṇava rites and ceremonies. The central inspiration of Western Indian Pictorial Art—(which includes the pure Gujarāti or Southern Rājasthāni miniature—art dating from the 11th century onwards—up to the end of the 16th century and the well-known Rajput art which obtains from 17th century up to the end of the 19th) is mostly Vaiṣṇava. Vernacular poetry and painting, popular music and celebrations of festivals are the various expressions of this common inspiration.

The cult of loving devotion, with Sri Kṛṣṇa as the central figure arose about the 10th or the 11th century. It was the way to salvation open to all, irrespective of birth, rank or sex, as contrasted with the highway of knowledge accessible only to the few. This mediæval resurgence of popular religion and culture has not yet spent its force, and has continued to dominate the art and literature of the country for practically a millennium.

Since the advent of the Mahomedans, the days of Mahākāvyas, of epics had gone. There was also then no scope for grandiose sculpture and elaborate fresco-painting, for it was a time of popular resurgence and democratisation of culture. Miniature-painting was, therefore, not an accident—but a logical extension of the culture which was now becoming the property of the masses through the cultivation of the vernaculars—the spoken tongue of the people. It was a decline, it was perhaps inevitable, for the standards of early classics in art could not naturally be maintained. Hence the miniature-painting of pre-Mughal days never overcame the disabilities of its plebian origin, and it did not attain its aesthetic possibilities until it came under the sheltering wing of royal patronage.

*Hindu painting is essentially an aristocratic folk-art, appealing to all classes alike, static, lyrical and inconceivable, apart from the life it reflects as contrasted to Mughal painting which is academic, dramatic, objective and eclectic. After Akbar, Mughal painting is almost devoid of any poetical background. Hindu painting, on the other hand, illustrates every phase of mediæval Sanskrit, Hindi and Rājasthāni literature, and indeed, its themes cannot be understood without a thorough knowledge of the Indian

* "Term 'Hindu' is to be preferred to what is called 'Rajput painting,' as it fixes the attention more on the cultural and religious forces which inspired and moulded its peculiar development, while the word 'Rajput' refers more to the source of patronage. 'Hindu painting' can be subdivided into various classes such as Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jaina, etc."

—N. C. Mehta: '*Studies in Indian Painting*,' p. 61, footnote.

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epics, the Kṛṣna-līlā literature, music and erotics. Hindu painting is, thus, more akin to the art of literary composition—a kind of pictorial interpretation rather than mere embellishment of poetic themes.

The development of the Hindi and the Rājasthāni literature during the Mughal period is closely and organically connected with the evolution of Hindi painting as exemplified in the pictures illustrating the various sentiments (*rasa*), the different kinds of heroes (*nāyakas*) and heroines (*nāyikās*), the seasons of the year and the modes of music. In fact the poets not infrequently furnished the imaginative frame-work which was elaborated by the artists into glowing pictures of concrete images and appropriate atmosphere. It was always the painter who copied and translated the poet's ideas : and it is because of this that the verses of Jayadeva, Behāri, Keśavadās and Matirām and the episodes of the Shrimad Bhāgavata form the principal repertory of Hindu painting. This practice of depending upon the poet for ideas and imagery was fully in consonance with ancient traditions ; for the philosopher in this country furnished the intellectual foundation and set the rules, on and within which the artist was free to expand himself.

Hindu painting reached its zenith under the fostering care of royal courts and with its decline the art also languished. In fact, in the history of Hindu painting, there was an early differentiation between patronage-art and the art which exclusively attached itself to temple-building. The former developed into miniature-painting, the earliest remnants of which are found in the Mss. of Jaina canonical works. It was partly secular and partly religious, cultivated as a pastime and an accomplishment at the courts and residences of princes and wealthy merchants. The art of temple work is witnessed in the immortal frescoes of Ajaṇṭā and Bāgh, Sigiriā and Sittānvāsal. The Rajput princes and the wealthy middle class in Western India shared with the common people their benefits in the religious ideas—which are real inspirators of Rajput art. The difference, therefore, between Mughal art and Hindu art lies not only in their difference of clientéle but also of ideas and outlook.

Technically and stylistically the differences are quite clear. Apart from the illustrations of manuscripts in direct continuation of Persian tradition, Mughal painting is essentially an art of miniature-painting ; and when enlarged, becomes an easel picture : Indian Ms. illustrations are, however, in a totally different tradition : Hindu painting enlarged thus becomes a mural fresco, historically, indeed, it is a reduced wall-painting. This is better illustrated by some specimens from the Gītagovinda Ms. under notice in this paper.

Traces of Vaiṣṇavism may be said to be evident in Gujarāt even earlier than the 13th century, as is known from King Sāraṅgadeva's inscription of Saṁvat 1348 (1292 A.D.) which records a continuation of the gift for the worship of and offerings to the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the old temple at Pālaṇpur (N. Gujarāt)*. The introductory verse of this stone-inscription, which is the last verse of the 1st canto of the Gītagovinda, and

*The relevant portion of the inscription is reproduced in my paper on " *A 15th Century Gītagovinda Ms. with Gujarāti Paintings* " in the *Bombay University Journal*, May 1938.

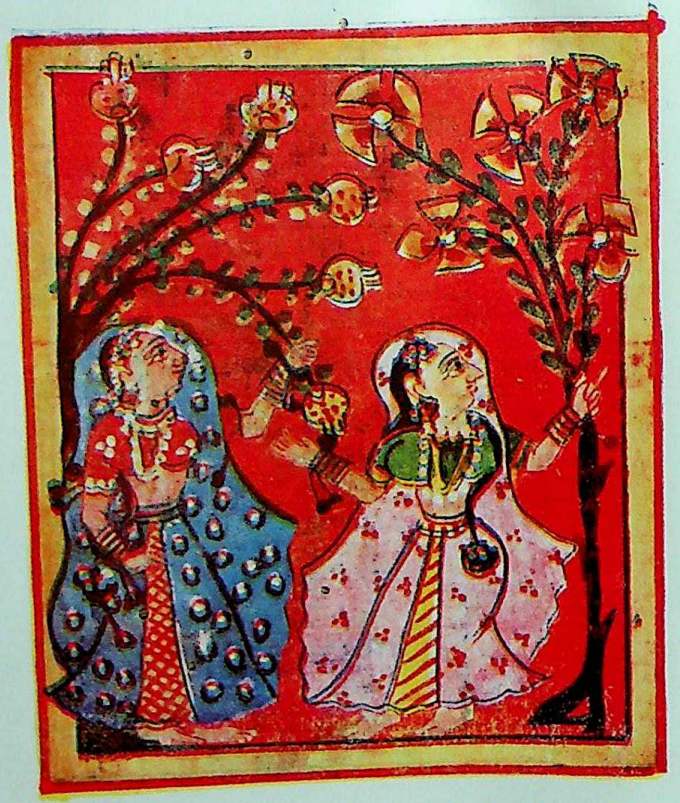

PLATE IV—विहरति हरिरिह सरसवसंते । सर्ग १

Hari is sporting and dancing here (with ladies) in the spring in its full bloom

PLATE V—चारु चुचुंब नितंबवती दयितं पुलकैरनुकूलं । सर्ग १

The Gopi with heavy hips kissed her beloved (Krsna) in a charming manner (to tell something near the ear) that was favourable on account of horripilation

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describes Kṛṣṇa as the essence of the ten *avatāras* establishes the fact with greater certainty. Popularity of Viṣṇu-worship in Gujarāt can be gauged from the unique and rich varieties of Viṣṇu images of Mediæval Indian Sculpture, that are met with in all sizes and in varying aesthetic qualities.*

The fact that out of the whole text of the lyrical poem, the *daśāvatāra-stuti* verse had found its way in a stone-inscription shows how the popularity of the saint-poet of Bengal in the East had reached the farther West province of India—Gujarāt ; and it shows, also, how the work had become quasi-sacred on this side of India, which has its famous pilgrim centres of Prabhāsa and Dwārkā intimately connected with the cult of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, incessantly visited by the ever-moving caravans of pilgrims from all parts of India who used to exchange among themselves devotional songs and sweet prayers carried from such avowed centres of Hindu culture. It is also significant that in the earliest known illustrated Mss. of the Gītagovinda, only the ten *avatāras* are reproduced in line and colour ; the other religio-erotic scenes from the poem being left out for later artists to visualise. The illustrated sets of the *Bālagopālastuti Mss.* by Bilva Maṅgala, the author of *Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta* in the pure Gujarāti style, may be mentioned here in passing to show the popularity of Kṛṣṇa-cult in Gujarāt early in the 15th century.

A mediæval sculpture with a Kṛṣṇa legend (Bāla Kṛṣṇa standing near the churning vessel) is found on a pillar at the Sun temple of Modherā, built in the 11th century. An image of Govardhanadhārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa now at Verāval (Southern Kāṭhiāwād) brought from Devapaṭṭan bears an inscription of the installation of the image in Valabhi Saṁvat 927 (V.S. 1302) by a lady of the Āhira caste.

The sculptured pillar (circa 6th century) with two incidents from the life of Bāla Kṛṣṇa—the Nāgadamana and the Govardhanadhāraṇa—unearthed at Maṇḍor, near Jodhpur, in 1905 by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar pushes back the history of the Kṛṣṇa-cult in Western India several centuries earlier.

Coming to later period, a folio from the Mss. of the *Viṣṇubhakti-candrodaya* is mentioned in the *Bhavnagar Inscriptions* dated Saṁvat 1469, evidently prior either to Chaitanya or Vallabha.

Thus the cult of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, manifested itself in many channels rather unobserved until the 15th century, when Vaiṣṇavism had evolved into a sect. It was left for Vallabhāchārya to turn it into a popular religion of the Gujarāti Hindus, with an aesthetic and practical code of worship. Accordingly, other cults were absorbed in the all-absorbing Vaiṣṇavism of Vallabha.

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*cf : " *Studies in Varieties of Viṣṇu Images from Gujarāt* " in Dr. Bhagwānlāl Indraji Commemoration Volume *Journal of the Gujarāt Research Society*, October 1939, by M. R. Majmudār.

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The *Magnum opus* of Vaiṣṇava Bhakti-Śāstra is *Śrīmat Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, attributed to Vyāsa, the author of Mahābhārata, who had omitted the treatment of Bhakti ; and it was to make up that want that he brought out the *Bhāgavata*. While the *Harivaṃśa* and the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* each gives some account of Kṛṣṇa's youth spent among the *gopas* and *gopis* of Vrandāvana and its neighbourhood, they deal with the whole life of Kṛṣṇa : whereas the *Bhāgavata* scarcely refers to his later life, but spends all its strength over his boyhood and youth : hence the hold it has had on some of the best Vaiṣṇava sects and communities, and on many of the noble minds of India. *Bhāgavata* has come to be the gospel of popular Vaiṣṇavism and the inexhaustible repertory of Hindu literature and painting. The subject-matter of the Gītagovinda is due to the same source.

The *Gītagovinda*—the song celestial in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa—of *Jayadeva* (died 1120 A. D.) may be said to be the first as well as the finest poetical expression of that great devotional wave of Vaiṣṇavism, which swept through India and revolutionized the life of the people in the 15th and the 16th centuries. Popular Vaiṣṇavism sounded the innermost depths of the common consciousness, which under its fecund inspiration, found expression in a variety of ways. It was in a way a revival of popular culture, which produced in the domain of Hindi literature lofty and refined melodies and accomplished verses of poets like Sūradās, Behāri, Matirām and Keśavadās.

The subject of the *Gītagovinda*—a lyrical drama—is the love of Kṛṣṇa for the beautiful cowherdess Rādhā, the estrangement of their loves and their final reconciliation. There are four aspects in which the *Gītagovinda* is viewed by Indian readers : (*i*) literary, (*ii*) devotional, (*iii*) musical, and (*iv*) mystical. All these views combined have led to the wide popularity of the poem, all over India. The ten incarnations of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa are of universal acceptance among Hindus : and the popularity of the Gītagovinda resting on this view has not suffered in the least in spite of its Śṛṅgāric (erotic) note—the sensualism in full bloom—woven in sweet words of exquisite music. It is the devotional side of the Gītagovinda that has found greater appeal in Western India, especially the hymn of the ten incarnations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Jayadeva*, its author, too, is looked upon more as a *bhakta*, rather than a poet as he figures in Nābhāji's Hindi *Bhakatamālā* and in the Gujarāti poem *Surata-Saṅgrāma* of Narasimha Mehtā, the poetry of whom is highly reminiscent of *Jayadeva's* work.

The *Gītagovinda*, like the *Kṛṣṇa-Karṇāmrita* of Bilva Maṅgala (which has several verses in common to *Bālagopālastuti* mentioned above) is a group of erotico-mystic lyrics of considerable devotional fervour on the romantic theme of Kṛṣṇa. This theme must have been a living reality to the poet as well as to his audience. There has been a great deal of

PLATE VI—रासरसे सह नृत्यपरा हरिणा युवतिः प्रशशंसे । सर्ग १

The young Gopi dancing with Hari in the Rāsa-dance
was highly admired by him

PLATE VII—गणयति गुणग्रामं भ्रामं भ्रमादपि नेहते । सर्ग २

The Gopi says : " My mind counts the innumerable qualities of Kṛṣṇa,
and does not show anger even through mistake "

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mediæval scholastic interpretation, but no account of theological subtlety can overlay the artistic and human appeal of the poem. In spite of simplicity and directness, the poem possesses all the distinctive features of a deliberate work of art. Its undoubted verbal melody and highly sensuous pictorial effect, authenticated by a deep sincerity of ecstatic emotion, make it a finished product of great lyric beauty. Devout yet sensuous, it expresses fervant religious longings in the intimate language of earthly passion, and illustrates finely the use of love-motif in the service of religion.

(ii)

The earliest illustrated manuscript of the *Gītagovinda* so far known to us (of course being limited only to miniatures for six of the ten avátāras of Kṛṣṇa, with an introductory one for Śāradā) was published by me in the *Journal of the University of Bombay, Volume VI, Part VI*, May 1938, under the title "A 15th Century Gītagovinda Ms. with Gujarāti Paintings," with colour-reproductions of the extant miniatures which are in the pure Gujarāti style.

A later version of the Gītagovinda in paintings, executed at Basholi in the Kashmir State belonging to the first half of the 17th century, contains miniatures which cover each an entire page with the text written on the back; they were exhibited by Śriyuta Ajit Ghosh at the 2nd Lucknow Art Exhibition in 1926, and one of them was published in *Rupam No.* 37 (Plate opposite page 6).

N. C. Mehta was first to publish the pictorial composition of the Gītagovinda by Māṇaku—a goldsmith by caste, the court-artist of Tehri-Garhwāl, a Rajput State in the Himalayas, in Samvat 1887, who, it is recorded, was inspired by a lady of distinction to "compose," as he calls it, his pictorial version of *Jayadeva's* celebrated masterpiece. The whole of the Gītagovinda has been composed by Māṇaku in scores of paintings, out of which two are reproduced in the "*Studies in Indian Painting*" as Plates 23 and 24 (Chapter V: The Court-Art of Tehri-Garhwāl).

Dr. Stella Kramarisch published the illuminations of a Gītagovinda manuscript, about a century old from Bengal, in the *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, December 1934, with the text in Bengali characters. The glow of post-Chaitanya painting in Bengal lingers in these miniatures.

The simple yet suggestive miniatures of the manuscript, introduced through this paper, belong to the Early Rājasthāni or Gujarāt style of painting of about the early 16th century. Simplicity in design and in composition suggests an early date for the Ms. as we know from a close study of the *Kalpasūtra* Mss., and Mss. of the *Devīmāhātmya* that

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the illustrations in the narrative art—grow more copious, more complex and more crowded with details as we progress from century to century.

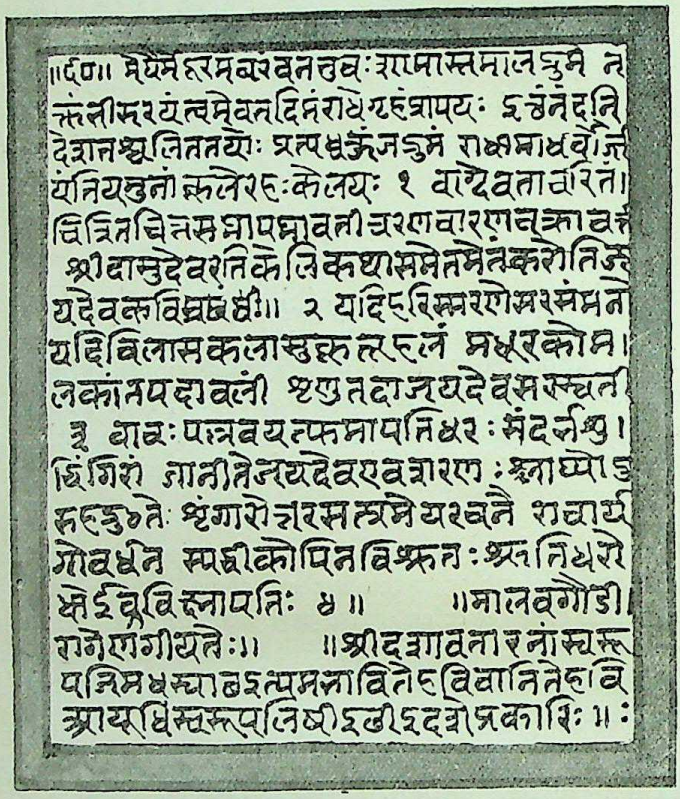

PLATE I

(Last three lines in Old Gujarāti prose of late 15th Century.)

The Ms. was only recently acquired by the Honorary Secretary of the Gujarāt Vernacular Society, Ahmedabad, from a Baroda Memon, dealer in antiquities. I am obliged to the Asst. Secretary, Śrīyuta Rasikalāl Parikh, for kindly making it convenient to place the Ms. at my disposal for purposes of study.

It is a tiny manuscript measuring about 4″ × 5″, amply illuminated on hand-made paper and painted with indigenous colours, directly on the surface of the paper, without priming. The surface of the paper-page is designed on the palm-leaf manuscript page, it being its one-third in this instance.

The Ms. comprising of 34 folios (68 sides) with 35 miniatures is, however, incomplete, the text running up to the end of the eleventh *sarga*, and some portion of the twelfth, leaving us quite ignorant of the exact date and name of the artist or the copyist. However, the

PLATE VIII—सोत्कंठ राधा

Rādhā full of longing

PLATE IX—Kṛṣṇa meeting Rādhā

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introductory remarks contained in the three lines* at the bottom of the first folio (Plate I) in Old Gujarāti prose, leaves very little doubt about the location of the Ms., and its style of execution, which must be somewhere in Western India, where the Old Western Rājasthāni or Early Gujarāti language was in vogue.

We are here incidentally reminded of the illuminated *Bhāgavata* manuscript in Jodhpur Fort Library, wherein the legend of the miniatures in the Sanskrit text with *Bhāvārthadīpikā* commentary of Śrīdhara is given in Old Gujarāti prose(e.g. : वसुदेव विवाह करि जायी छि । यशोदायी शय्याइं कृष्ण मूक्या । ऊखली चढी याष्टि वडी छिद्र करी मुख धरि छि । कृष्ण नासि छि । यशोदा याष्टि लेई पूठीं धाइ छि । etc.) The Manuscript is dated Samvat 1667 ; scribe's name is Suraji and the artist's name is Govind†.

One of the oldest Rājput paintings of the Kṛṣṇa-līlā theme, published by Dr. A. K. Coomarswamy with a title " Kṛṣṇa Expecting Rādhā " ‡ shows in style, lyrical theme and the language of the superscription (" .....ठाकुरजी एक ध्यान मारग जुवै छै । सषी आगै पधरावती हुई बागमाहे अनेक व्रष छै । ") an intermediate relation to the Gujarāti paintings of the 15th century. It is introduced as being of the Early Rājput (Rajāsthāni) or Gujarāti style of the 16th century.

The illuminations of this Gītagovinda Ms. are planned according to one idea, which is carried out with a few variations on some pages. In every case the written text as well as the miniatures occupy almost a square panel : the idea in the text is illustrated by a miniature on the obverse or the reverse of the folio, without any text.

The variation from this main theme occurs within the first five folios (ten sides) of the *Daśāvatāra Stotra* (Hymn of the ten incarnations) where every stanza from the *Aṣṭapadi* in *Sarga* I is given on the top of the miniature (Plate II) forming as it were the legend of the miniature. The writing of moderate merit with 17 to 18 lines in a page as a rule, is wellbalanced within the outlines of the panel. The spelling of 'गोविंद' as 'गोव्यंद' with similar other words mis-spelt 'युगदीश' for 'जगदीश,' 'रामग्यरी राग' for 'रामग्री,' etc. at end of each *Sarga* is reminiscent of a similar corrupt script noticed in another 15th century Ms. of Gītagovinda, with Gujarāti paintings.§

* Text : "श्री दशावतारनां स्वरूप, जिम धर्या छइ त्यम भावि, तेहवी वानि, तेहवि आयुधि, स्वरूप लिषीइ छीइ दशे प्रकारि ।"

† For a detailed Note on this illustrated Ms., reader is referred to my paper on " Some Illustrated Mss. of the Gujarāt School of Painting " : VII All-India Oriental Conference, Proceedings, pp. 827–835 (1933).

‡ Reproduced in colours, in *Rupam*, and in black and white as Plate LXXXII, in the " *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* " by Dr. Coomarswamy (1927).

§ *Vide* my paper on " A 15th Century Gītagovinda Ms. with Gujarāti Paintings " in the *Bombay University Journal*, Vol. VI, Part VI, May 1938.

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The panels and scenes, on the whole, illustrate the words given either in the front page or the backside of the miniature ; they show mood and setting not only of the *Gītagovinda*, but they hold the atmosphere of Vaiṣṇava lyricism. They surround the text and have by far larger share in the illustrations. The text runs on from page to page, while a wide and multifarious setting in the miniatures keeps present the fragrance in which the special scenes and moods are embedded, and in which they may, but need not be shown exactly with the text.

Here, as throughout Indian art, it is the *sthāyi-bhāva* (the thing that stays of the amours of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā) which is made visible form. It is diffused through the paintings ; they are the permanent setting for the current of the song, its broadly speaking embankments.

The rectangular space of the illustrations (ālekya-sthāna) on the standard size of the page attempts to depict the sentiment of the text, in the language of line and colour. The creepers and trees brimming with flowers and fruits, river with fish and tortoise, the symmetrical avenue of the trees symbolising the groves of Vṛndāvana create the fusion of sentiment to be delineated (*vide* Plate III). The traditional palm-leaf theme, freed from size and shape of the actual palm-leaf, sets the scheme of lay-out in about four of the miniatures. The painter's response to the song, as a painter, concentrates the pattern into a type of book-illustration quite different from the marginal embellishments of Mughal Mss.

Out of the 35 miniatures in this Ms. enclosed in a square frame, 28 are done in brick-red ground, the remaining seven on faint yellow. The colours used are red, green, blue, pink, rose, pure white and pearly white, the latter being employed to depict jewelled ornaments or floral decorations. Gold is conspicuous by its absence. The flowers and creepers fill in the empty space in the composition of the panel. Landscape without human figures is rare in Indian painting ; and in these illustrations it is delineated to heighten the effect of the setting and the mood.

The dress-scheme in female figures is in continuation of the pure Gujarāti style, which is slowly drifting towards the Rājasthāni. The vigour of the bodily movement is emphasised by the movement of the garments. A clean and flowing line nearest to that of the later Kāngrā painting, although more homely, is supported by the manner in which the *Sari* is worn ; and it sums up the figure within long flowing lines. As a study of rhythmic motion and spontaneous gesture these miniatures are very interesting.

The weakest point in these illustrations is the figure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is neither elegant, charming nor expressive. Kṛṣṇa, delineated in countless pictures of Hindu painters, is seldom up to the standard of the intensity of love and devotion with which He was contemplated and

PLATE X—Kṛṣṇa appeasing Rādhā

PLATE XI—Meeting of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā

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adored. "Throughout the entire range of Rajput or Hindu portraiture of the mediæval age there hardly emerges a glorious form of Man or his apotheosis, comparable for instance to the immortal figure of *Avalokiteśvara* holding the blue lotus adorning the walls of the Ajanṭ caves. On the other hand the feminine creations of Hindu painters leave but little to be desired by way of graceful, tender and sweet representations of womanhood."

Of the Mughal tradition there are but faint traces: the profile is reminiscent of it, and the floral patterns are at times replaced by arabesques. Almost invariably the faces are in profile: they stand out clearly against the ground, archaic, thin and in good taste. The figures are arranged, singly or in groups. The groups on the single pages, with never more than four figures at the most, only incidentally illustrate the text. They visualize the thing that stays, the mood of the song, that is the mood in which the painter visualized the song.

It is evident from the bare outline that has survived the colours, sometimes deplorably worn out—as in many of the miniatures like those of the *Vasanta-Vilāsa* (published by N. C. Mehta in "A Further Essay on Vasanta-Vilāsa" in 1931), and of the *Earliest Devī-māhātmya miniatures* (published by the writer in the "Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art" for 1938)—that it is the outline that establishes all the facts of the narrative.

Though the colouring is strong and brilliant in places, still one feels that it is less essential than the drawing. The compositions, formal and traditionally fixed with abundance of details, are brilliant statements of facts and at times expressive of emotions from the literary composition, and every event is told in the art of symbols. Theme and formula compose an inseparable unity; text and pictures form a continuous relation of the same fact.

In these outline sketches, which share the primitiveness of the art, there are no lights and shades. When colours are used, the pigments are selected not because they conform to the colours of objects, but because they help to make the pattern stand out clearly. These outlines are sharp and distinct. There is no shading or blending of surfaces.

Contrast and easy selection are the dominant motives of the artist. In other words, these painted pages are merely another version of the same story told swifty and vividly through the medium of line and colour.

Pure bright tints like red, green, blue, pink, rose and pearly white are used in conjunction with a few strokes of the brush. There is no attempt at technical finish or optical illusion. These mediaeval paintings are somewhat in the nature of modern posters. The lines and colours are there to emphasize their message through their distinctive medium and

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with their peculiar vocabulary. In short, the presentation is characteristically linear, as can be seen from the black-and-white reproduction of Plate No. III, for example—

PLATE III—Rādhā with her Sakhi (attendant).

Naturally therefore emphasis is laid on a lucid rendering of the scenes, on the appropriate illustration of the incidents rather than on representing the actual appearances either of the environment or of the human figures. The pictorial rendering is a mere substitute for a verbal rendering generalized and effective in a country of vast spaces and many scripts and languages like India.

These excellent illustrations of Line—which is fundamental and not carefully drawn and redrawn, possess a naive charm and simplicity that finished work often lacks. The human figure of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā and her attendants, though highly stylized with projecting beak-like nose and long bulging eyes, even though drawn in profile, has all the qualities of a sure and vigorous sketch—a concise statement in a pictorial skript. The figure of Kṛṣṇa, however, is very crude as shown with a heavy type of *mukuṭa*; and in some cases marking of mustaches even for Bāla Kṛṣṇa is, perhaps, due to a convention where ideal manhood is so represented

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as in the figure of Kāmadeva in the *Ratirahasya* Ms. (vide *Bom. Univ. Journal*, May 1937, Plate I). It should also be admitted that there is a certain sameness of treatment in these illustrations and little variety of subject-matter which is the loves of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā; yet their importance, both from the aesthetic and historical points of view, is nevertheless unquestionable. The treatment of trees and foliage is another point of interest in this Ms.

It can be laid down as a fact that the figures in the Gujarāti and the Southern Rājasthāni miniatures are not individualistic but reduced to certain formal types, while the colouring is almost invariably flat. Trees, water, clouds, houses also partake of the same formalism that helps to simplify the content of the picture, and does not make it in any way stilted or artificial.

The pictorial representation in Plates VII, VIII and X is evidently the forerunner of later Rāgamālā series and the Nāyaka-nāyikābheda group of the Rajput School, because even though it does not display much technical excellence, it is possessed of great vitality, bold cryptic statement, a primitive outlook and a vivid sense of colour.

There appears to be an interrelation between the Southern Rājasthāni School of early Rāgamālās and the Gujarāti Ms. illustrations, despite many differences; because the main inspiration both of Gujarāti and Rājasthāni miniatures was literary and religious. We are here reminded of the painting "*Kṛṣṇa Expecting Rādhā*" published by Dr. A. K. Coomarswami, and described as a specimen of Southern Rājasthāni, of early 16th century. The Gītagovinda miniatures, introduced through this paper belong, on stylistic grounds to the same or a slightly early period, as further evidenced by the Old Gujarāti text of late 15th century, referred to above.

The importance of this find need not be further dwelt upon, as it undoubtedly makes a valuable addition to the materials of Hindu miniature-painting in Gujarāt so far known to us.*

In conclusion, I have the pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to the University of Bombay for the substantial help it has been granting towards the cost of conducting this research work and of publishing the results thereof with suitable colour-reproductions of the original.

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*A single folio of *Bhāgavata Daśama Skandha* with a miniature in pure Gujarāti style (dated *Saṁvat* 1690) has just come to light at the exhibition of Vaiṣṇava Temple Art, inaugurated by His Holiness Shri Vrajaratna Lālji Māhāraja, at Badā Mandir, Surat on 24th November 1941. It belongs to the valuable Mss. treasure of His Holiness Shri Vrajabhūsaṇa Lālji Māhārāja of Kānkaroli near Nāthadwārā (Mewād). This find helps to establish the prevalence of the peculiar Gujarāti style of miniature painting up to the Second Period of Western India Painting, *i.e.*, 1650 A.D.

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RAGHUNĀTHA, A PROTÉGÉ OF QUEEN DĪPĀBĀI OF TANJORE, AND HIS WORKS—BETWEEN A.D. 1675–1712

By

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AUFRECHT[1] mentions an author of the name Raghunātha Sūri, who composed a work on Dietetics called the *Bhojana-Kutūhala*. He mentions no other works of this author, though many other namesakes[2] of Raghunātha and their works are recorded by Aufrecht. I propose to examine in this paper the question of the identity of some ot these namesakes with Raghunātha Sūri the author of the *Bhojana-Kutūhala*, with which I have dealt with elsewhere[3]. When I studied this work on dietetics I had no idea that this author had composed any other works. Subsequently Mr. R. Rangachariar published a paper[4] on the

[1] CC. I, 484—" रघुनाथसूरि—Bhojana-Kutūhala ".

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 483-486.

[3] My paper on this work will be published after some time.

[4] *Journal of S. M. Library, Tanjore*, Vol. I, No. 2 (1939–1940), page 29—" *Raghunathsūri and his Bhojana-Kutūhala* ". Here the Colophons of the भोजनकुतूहल and धर्मामृतमहोदधि are recorded as follows :—

—" इति श्रीमद्विद्वद्वन्द्यपादारविन्दश्रीमदनन्तदेवोदयस्य **रघुनाथ**विदुषः कृतौ **भोजनकुतूहले** द्रव्यगुणागुणकथनं **नाम** प्रथमः परिच्छेदः "

—" इति श्रीमत्सकलभूमण्डलमण्डलायमानश्रीमदनन्तदेवात्मजश्रीमदापदेवतत्सुतश्रीमदनन्तदेवोदयस्य **रघुनाथ**विदुषः कृतौ **धर्मामृतमहोदधिनिबन्धने** गोदानविधिः "

Mr. Rangachariar identifies अनन्तदेव common to both the above Colophons with अनन्तदेव the author of the मीमांसान्यायप्रकाश who " *is known to have flourished during the end of the 16th Century A.D.*" The author of मीमांसान्यायप्रकाश was आपदेव and not अनन्तदेव. His genealogy is as follows :—

a. of मी. न्या. प्रकाश

एकनाथ→ आपदेव (I)→ अनन्तदेव (I)→ आपदेव (II) (A.D. 1600–1650)→ अनन्तदेव [a. of स्मृतिकौस्तुभ] (A.D. 1675–1700).

(*Vide* my paper on Āpadeva in the *F. W. Thomas Com. Volume*).

If the statement of the Colophon of धर्मामृतमहोदधि is correct we must verify what अनन्तदेव is connected with रघुनाथ the author of the *BK* and the धर्मामृतमहोदधि.

Mr. Rangachariar further observes :—" This Raghunāthasūri appears to be a native of northern parts and a *Maharatta* for he quotes *Maharatta* Synonyms frequently in this work " (*i.e.*, भोजनकुतूहल). These remarks are correct as will be seen from the Marathi works of our author mentioned later in this paper.

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MUDRĀRĀKṢASA AND KAUMUDĪMAHOTSAVA

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A CRITICAL study of Mudrārākṣasa has led me to believe that Viśākhadatta has made many a covert reference to the drama Kaumudīmahotsava.[1] Before I proceed to note down these references, I shall recapitulate some of the discussion that has been initiated by late Dr. K. P. Jayaswal in this connection.[2]

Dr. K. P. Jayaswal has suggested that Caṇḍasena of Kaumudīmahotsava is Candragupta I of the Gupta dynasty. Now following is the synopsis of the play. Somewhere in A.D. 320 (according to Jayaswal), Sundaravarman was the king of Magadha, ruling at Pāṭalīputra. Caṇḍasena, who was adopted by Sundaravarman, revolted against him, when a son named Kalyāṇavarman was born to Sundaravarman in his old age : and with the help of his relatives the Licchavis, Caṇḍasena defeated Sundaravarman and made himself the king of Magadha. Kalyāṇavarman, the minor child of Sundaravarman was removed to Vindhyas by the old faithful ministers. And later on, after about 20 years, when Caṇḍasena was away to his frontiers to quell a rebellion, the ministers invaded Pāṭalīputra, captured it and installed Kalyāṇavarman on the throne. Just at the time of his installation Kalyāṇavarman was married to Kīrtimatī with whom he had fallen in love earlier. On this occasion of double joy the minister ordered the celebration of Kaumudīmahotsava (Festival of Moon-light), which was done with great enthusiasm and which gave the title to the play.

Dr. Jayaswal has suggested that this Kalyāṇavarman could not have ruled long at Pāṭalīputra. According to him in about four years time, i.e., about A.D. 344, Candragupta was able to collect forces and drive away or destroy Kalyāṇavarman. In this connection the following points are to be noted :

(1) Candragupta's re-accession to the throne.

(2) Kalyāṇavarman's Kaumudīmahotsava.

Now my belief is that Jayaswal's theory is correct in the main, though in one or two minor details there is room for difference of opinion. These

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[1] Ed. in the Quarterly Journal of the Andhra Research Society, Vols. II and III ; also separately published in the Dakshinabharati series, Madras.

[2] See Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, XII, pp. 50ff ; also his History of India, pp. 113ff.

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points I shall discuss in the second part of this paper. But this much seems to be true that Candragupta I came to the throne, enjoyed it for about 20 years, lost it and regained it after about four years. For this period of four years Kalyāṇavarman was the king at Pāṭalīputra.

Now the play Kaumudīmahotsava was avowedly written on the occasion of Kalyāṇavarman's accession to the throne. I think that Mudrārākṣasa was written for the occasion of the re-accession of Candragupta I. That is, within about four years of the performance of Kaumudīmahotsava, Mudrārākṣasa was composed and performed. The following from Mudrārākṣasa lends full support to such a hypothesis.

(1) Why has Viśākhadatta selected kaumudīmahotsavapratiṣedha as an excuse for the feigned quarrel? He could have found out any other excuse; but if he wished to ridicule and insult the earlier festival of kaumudī as well as the play Kaumudīmahotsava, he may well do so. If we read the whole episode from this view, we find that throughout the third act, there are many concealed thrusts at Kaumudīmahotsava play. In Kaumudīmahotsava the order for the festival is given by the minister Mantragupta, in Mudrārākṣasa the order for the festival is given by the king and is cancelled by the minister Cāṇakya, thus possibly suggesting that the latter was a more powerful minister than Mantragupta. The order for the festival in Kaumudīmahotsava is given thus : (p. 39)

भो: कुसुमपुरवासिन: पौरा: शृण्वन्तु शृण्वन्तु भवन्तो मान्त्रिमहत्तरस्य मन्त्रगुप्तस्य वचनम्—नित्योत्सवेऽपि कुसुमपुरे महोत्सव: समादिश्यते । कुत:—

प्रासादशृङ्गमधिरुह्य दिदृक्षतेऽसौ
हर्षोत्सवप्रमुदितं नगरं नरेन्द्र: ।
उज्जृम्भमाणमुदधिं समुदीयमान:
पूर्वाचलेन्द्रशिखरादिव पूर्णचन्द्र: ॥

Thus here the king Kalyāṇavarman ascends his palace—the famous Sugāṅga palace—for witnessing the festival, so does Candragupta ascend the same palace in Mudrārākṣasa.

This festival of Full-Moon is quite natural in Kaumudīmahotsava and is also important from the viewpoint of the authoress as the play derives its title from this festival. It cannot also be said that Kaumudīmahotsava has copied this item from Mudrārākṣasa, as the latter talks too pointedly about the kaumudīmahotsavapratiṣedha, suggesting the author's acquaintance with the earlier play. Any one who reads the third act of Mudrārākṣasa with an open mind will see the force of the above statement.[3]

[3] Jayaswal also sees the similarity of this scene in both the plays. See ABORI. K. Chattopadhayaya also finds the similarity clearly though his conclusion is different. cf. IHQ. Vol. XIV, p. 595.

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